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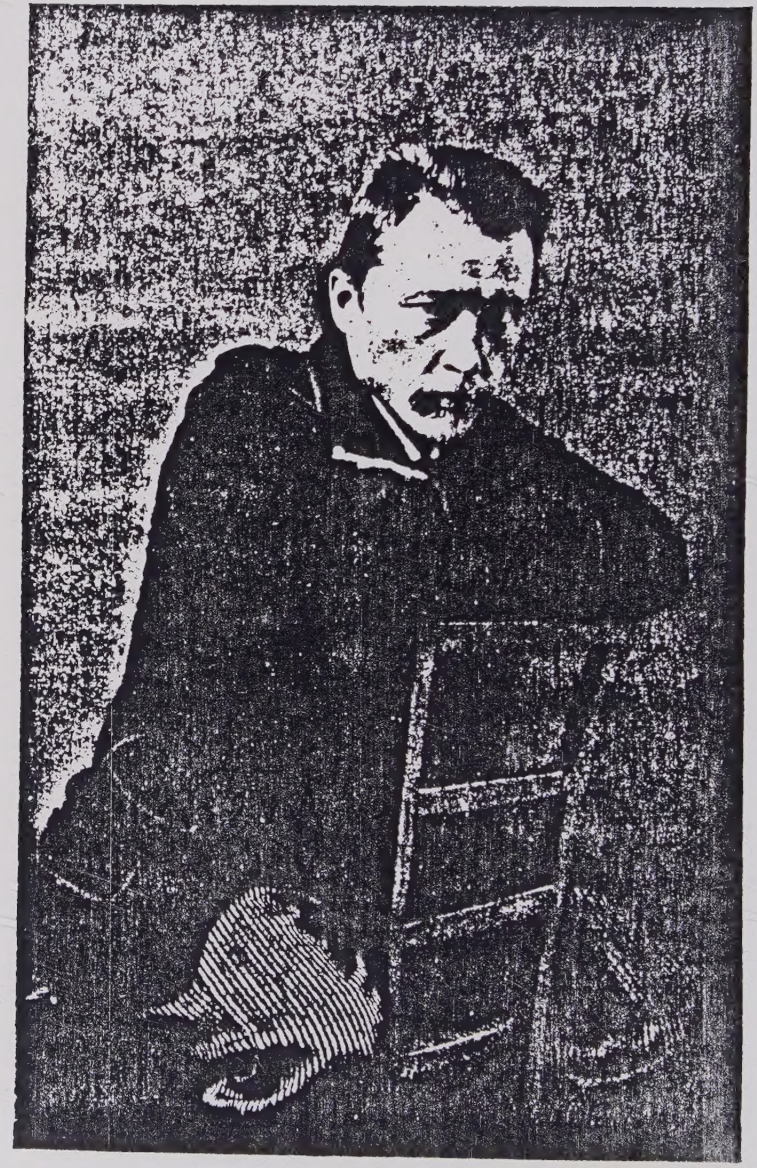

HUGO WOLF

HUGO WOLF

BY

ERNEST NEWMAN, 1868-1959.

WITH THIRTEEN ILLUSTRATIONS

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To KATO

PREFACE

ALTHOUGH Hugo Wolf has been dead only some four years, there already exists sufficient biographical and epistolary material to give a full-size picture of him. There are details, of course, that can only be filled in later on; his letters, for example, have had to be given to the world shorn of some of their pungent allusions to his contemporaries. We shall have to wait until a few people who are now living have been accommodating enough to die, before we can have the letters in their absolutely complete form. On other points fresh data will no doubt be forthcoming from time to time. But there are already plenty to work upon. First in importance is the biography by Dr. Ernst Decsey in four volumes, which may be taken as the official life. Besides the published letters, Dr. Decsey has had access to a number of unpublished ones, and has further benefited by the verbal communications of many of the personal friends of Wolf. His volumes, therefore, contain a mass of information not to be found elsewhere, particularly about the earlier part of Wolf's career. His quotations from the articles written by Wolf as musical critic

of the Vienna "Salonblatt" from 1884 to 1887 are especially valuable, though it is to be wished that a small volume containing the best of the articles could be published. I am greatly indebted to Dr. Decsey and to his publishers, Messrs. Schuster and Loeffler, for permission to make use of any of the material I might need from his biography. Many of the details in Dr. Decsey's book are of less interest to English than to Austrian or German readers, and I have accordingly passed them over. On the other hand, I have filled in a number of details from Wolf's letters which Dr. Decsey could afford to omit, the letters themselves being accessible to his readers. We are fortunately pretty well supplied with correspondence and reminiscences. Edmund Hellmer published some interesting correspondence in the "Deutsche Zeitung" of the 3rd April 1901, but this has not yet been issued in book form. There are three volumes of important letters, nearly all dating from the early nineties to 1898, when Wolf's mental life may be said to have ceased, and therefore covering the epoch of his greatest creative activity. There are 107 to Hugo Faisst, 77 to Emil Kauffmann, and 211 to Oscar Grohe and Frau Grohe. The "Jahrbuch der Musikbibliothek Peters" for 1904 contains 34 letters from Wolf to Paul Müller, extending from February 1896 to June 1898.

Of reminiscences and critical essays there is no lack. In 1903—the year of the composer's death—the magazine "Die Musik" published a special Hugo Wolf number.

Among the articles was the first part of some "Erinnerungen" by Paul Müller; these were concluded in the next number of "Die Musik." Dr. Michael Haberlandt's "Hugo Wolf, Erinnerungen und Gedanken," published in 1903, is an interesting little volume by one of the friends of the composer in his last years. While Wolf was still alive, but dying slowly in the asylum, his friends brought out two small volumes of "Gesammelte Aufsätze" (Collected Essays) upon his works, and another volume of critical and biographical articles dealing with the opera *Der Corregidor*; these are still interesting. Of the many other critical discussions of Wolf it must suffice to name three of the best,—those of Dr. Decsey in his biography, those of Dr. Richard Batka in some articles in a volume entitled "Kranz" (Leipzig, 1903), and a booklet by Paul Müller in the excellent series of "Moderne Essays" edited by Dr. Hans Landsburg and published by Gose and Tetzlaff, Berlin. A booklet by Wolf's publisher Karl Heckel—"Hugo Wolf in seinem Verhältniss zu Richard Wagner" (Munich 1905) is of considerable biographical and critical interest. Just as these pages are passing through the press I hear of a small volume on Wolf, by Eugene Schmitz, in Reclam's handy "Universalbibliothek."

E. N.

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HUGO WOLF

PART I.—LIFE

CHAPTER I

EARLY YEARS

THE family from which Hugo Wolf sprang is known to have resided in Windischgraz, in the south of Styria, since the eighteenth century. The town is still a small one, possessing to-day only some two thousand inhabitants. It was in the eighteenth century that Max Wolf, the great-grandfather of the musician, settled there. His son Franz, who was engaged in the leather trade, had at least two sons, the second of whom, Philipp (born 1st May 1828) became the father of Hugo. Philipp married one Katharina Nussbaumer; they had eight children, of whom Hugo, born on the 13th March 1860, was the fourth. The family seems to have been fairly prosperous; in 1867, however, Philipp was almost ruined by a big fire, from the effects of which his business never quite recovered. He was apparently an artist by temperament, playing the violin well and having some knowledge of the piano and the guitar; he had been placed in his father's business much against his own will, and always cherished a stronger affection for music than for commerce.

The young Hugo received his first musical lessons from

his father, who taught him the rudiments of violin and piano technique. The boy seems to have struck everyone as exhibiting decided musical capacity,—as being, indeed, more than an average child in most respects. Musical evenings were frequently held in the father's house, Philipp himself generally taking the first violin, Hugo the second, Weixler, a local teacher, the viola, and Hugo's brother Max the violoncello, while an uncle played the horn. Weixler took it upon him to give Hugo further instruction in the piano. He apparently never became a virtuoso on that instrument in the full modern sense of the word, but there is abundant testimony from his friends to the power and expressiveness of his later piano playing. It may further be recorded that as a boy he became an expert upon one of the most fascinating of musical instruments, the Jew's harp.

In 1865 he went to the Volksschule at Windischgraz; here he learned everything with his customary facility. He remained at the school for about four years,—until 1869. Even at this early age a literary talent manifested itself in him; it took the form, we are told, of satirical verses upon his father's friends and people of standing in the town. Music-making still went on at home, but there was never any thought of letting the boy become a musician by profession; the experienced father had too keen an intuition of the hardships that attend that career to think of embarking a son of his upon it. The music the boy met with at this time was not of a particularly high order; it consisted mostly of operatic pot-pourris and the usual mixed *répertoire* of the domestic amateur. Dr. Decsey, who has examined Wolf's early attempts at instrumental composition, finds in them a good deal of the influence of this *salonmusik*,—much empty flourish and shallow figure-work. In a concerto for violin and piano, for

example, written in 1877, the piano accompaniment to the main subject "is at first in semiquavers; later on it bursts out into scales and passage-work *à la* Theodor Oesten or some other favourite manufacturer of pot-pourris."

In September 1870 Hugo left his father's house for the first time to enter the Gymnasium at Graz, the chief city of Styria. For the next few years his education seems to have proceeded rather unsatisfactorily, either from defects on the part of his teachers, or from lack of application on his part,[1] or from a want of sympathy between them. He entered the first class at the Graz Gymnasium, he and his brother Max having lodgings with a family in the Wielandgasse. His teacher remembered him long afterwards as a rather short, squarely-built boy with plump cheeks and light hair, and of noticeably earnest manner. "His speech was soft and drawn-out, with a Slovenian tang which the children of German parents in Slovenian-speaking districts generally acquire." He stayed only one half-year at the Gymnasium, and left it with an unsatisfactory report. Music had, however, been cultivated during this time with rather more success than his other studies. The brothers took lessons in the violin from Ferd. Casper, in the school of the Styrian Musical Society, and in the piano from Johann Buwa,—though these piano lessons, so far as Hugo was concerned, lasted only a few weeks. Buwa who was still living in 1903, the year of Wolf's death, preserved at that time a faint recollection of his little pupil.

The boy was back in his father's house again in the summer of 1871. In September he was entered in the

[1] Dr. Decsey thinks he may have been badly taught at the school in Windischgraz, where only part of the instruction was given in the German language.

first class in the Benedictine St. Paul's school in the Lavant valley. Here again he does not seem to have been entirely comfortable. In 1902 Dr. Decsey visited the school and made the acquaintance of the venerable Father Sales Pirc, who had been Hugo's "Studienpräfekt" thirty years before. Father Sales was delighted to hear that the Hugo Wolf who had become so famous was the little Hugo who entered the school in 1871. He was, he said, a healthy, lively, honest boy, and popular with his comrades. He had not given great attention to his general studies, but had always been enthusiastic about music, and had often pleased and consoled the Father with his piano-playing. Music was the one thing, indeed, that the boy did really well at the school. His singing, according to the official report, was "excellent," and he was very useful at the organ in the services in the church. Music was always being sent over from Graz—though mostly only "arrangements" from Bellini, Rossini, Donizetti, and Gounod. Hugo took the piano part, one Gassmeyer played the violin, and they would occasionally be joined in a trio by Philipp Wolf himself, who used to come to the place on business, sell his hides, and then call at the school to make music with his son. Dr. Decsey and Father Sales turned up the school records and examined the reports made upon Hugo's progress. On the whole they were barely more than satisfactory. The boy, it appears from a letter of complaint he wrote at the time to his father, was not happy in the school. He was of a strong character and a nature that felt deeply and passionately; he regarded some of his teachers as tyrants, while they naturally looked upon him as "proud, perverse, and wilful." The Prefect had more that once written to his father about him, and finally had to recommend his

removal to another school, the immediate trouble apparently being Hugo's inability or unwillingness to acquire a knowledge of Latin as rapidly as a rather exacting professor desired.

His next school was at Marburg on the Drave, two hours' railway journey from Graz. Here in the autumn of 1873 he entered the Gymnasium with his younger brother Gilbert, the fifth child of Philipp. Hugo now shaped rather better for a little while, but the reports again were mostly unsatisfactory, and he left the school in 1875. By this time his father must have begun to feel some anxiety about him. The boy seems to have been well-regulated enough in other ways, but he was plainly not of the stuff out of which his father could hope to make a sober and contented man of business. He had already begun to think for himself; with other boys he was rather reserved, and outside the school he did not seek their companionship. One of his Marburg associates, now Dr. Roschanz, has sketched him for us as he was at that time. His musical knowledge had deepened a good deal. At fourteen he was "an excellent piano player," and spoke with enthusiasm of Mozart, Beethoven and other composers, but especially of Beethoven; he would discourse of the great musician and his deafness, and play his symphonies on the piano. The boy had by now realised with perfect clearness that his bent lay decisively towards music, and that he must be a musician or nothing; it was the old longing of the father for a life of art surging up again in the son, and growing, in that granitic, tenacious soul, to a power it had never been able to acquire in the more prudent nature of Philipp. Towards the end of the Marburg school-time Hugo wrote his father a letter in which he speaks in glowing terms of Hummel's "Missa

Solemnis," a performance of which had just been given in the Stadtkirche. He himself had been one of the violinists. As a result he had been brought into collision with the religious authorities at the school, and had had a scene with the directors. He is no good at the school, he tells his father; he must leave it and devote himself entirely to music.

The careful Philipp at first tried to dissuade his son from this course, describing to him the dangers of the musical life and the small esteem in which the musician was usually held. This drew a passionate reply from Hugo. "I have loved music so ardently," he cries. "It is food and drink to me. But since you do not want me to be a musician,[1] I will obey. Only God grant that your eyes will not be opened when it is too late for me to go back to music." In spite of his consciousness of possessing musical talent he will, he says, enter some profession, and trust to being happy in it.

Further details as to the combat between father and son are lacking; but the next thing we hear is that it is arranged that Hugo shall enter the Vienna Conservatoire. Thither, accordingly, he went in 1875. His chief subject was to be harmony, his teacher Franz Krenn; as subsidiary study he entered for the piano under Wilhelm Schenner. He made much more progress in his secondary than in his primary subject, perhaps finding himself out of touch with Krenn—a capable but rather dry and formal pedagogue. That he stood in need of a careful grounding in harmony is evident. Dr. Decsey speaks of three choruses for male

[1] He wants to be a "Musikus," not a "Musikant," he tells his father. The distinction between the slightly disparaging "Musikant"—the term used by Philipp—and the worthier "Musikus" is hardly translatable into concise English.

voices, to words by Goethe, which Hugo had composed in 1875 before going to Krenn, as showing undoubted signs of originality, but being often inexpert in treatment. There is nothing to indicate that he profited much by his instruction in harmony at the Conservatoire; his piano work, however, was satisfactory.

Towards the end of that year the boy had one of the richest experiences of his life. For some time the relations between Wagner and the Vienna Opera House, under the directorship of Herbeck, had not been too cordial. In May 1875, however, Herbeck was succeeded by Franz Jauners, who immediately established a better feeling with Wagner, and finally induced him to come in person to Vienna to superintend the production of "Tannhäuser" and "Lohengrin" at the Court Opera there. "Tannhäuser" was to be given in the Paris version, and "Lohengrin" was to be played without cuts. Wagner and Wagnerism had not yet conquered the Austrian capital; public opinion upon them was sharply divided, and the visit of the composer led of course to the usual excited and often bitter discussions. Wagner arrived on the 1st November; on the 3rd he conducted the first rehearsal. The performance of "Tannhäuser" took place on the 22nd, and for several weeks there was little talk in the town of anything but Wagner. Hugo's ardent young brain was fired by all this excitement. The great man was staying at the Imperial Hotel, close to the Conservatoire. Hugo sends full particulars to his father in a letter of 23rd November. Wagner, he says, is accompanied by his wife, and has seven rooms at the hotel. "Although he has been so long in Vienna, I did not have the good luck and joy to see him until the 17th November, at a quarter to eleven, outside the stage door of the Opera House. I went on the

stage and heard the rehearsal, in which Wagner took part. With a truly sacred awe did I look upon this great master of tone, for he is, according to present opinion, the greatest opera composer of them all. I went some steps towards him and saluted him very respectfully, whereupon he thanked me in a friendly way. From that very moment I felt an invincible inclination towards Richard Wagner, without having yet any notion of his music. Not till Monday, the 22nd November, was I initiated into his wonderful music; it was 'Tannhäuser,' given in the presence of the great Richard Wagner himself. I took my place outside the theatre at a quarter past two, although the opera, on this occasion, only began at half-past six, instead of at seven o'clock as usual. There was such a frightful crush that I got rather anxious about myself. I wanted to get out, but it was impossible, for no one round me would give way. So there was nothing for it but to stay where I was. When at last the door was opened, the whole crowd swept in, and it was my good luck to be drawn into the middle, for if I had got to the side I would have been smashed against the wall. But I was richly compensated for the awful fright I had had. I got my good old place in the fourth gallery. The overture was wonderful, and then the opera—I cannot find words to describe it. I will only say that I'm an idiot. After each Act Wagner was furiously called for, and I applauded so much that my hands were sore. I kept on shouting 'Bravo Wagner! Bravissimo Wagner!' until I became almost hoarse, and the people looked at me more than at Wagner. He was continually called for after each Act, and made his acknowledgments from his box. After the third and last Act he came on the stage, and then the jubilation was endless; after a triple demand he made a

short speech to the audience.[1] I will shortly send you the exact words of the Master; I copied them down in my note-book. Particulars about Wagner in my next letter. I have been quite taken out of myself by the music of this great master, and have become a Wagnerian."

Nothing would satisfy young Wolf now but a meeting with the great man himself. How he managed this he tells in a letter to his father, a couple of weeks after the foregoing one.

"Now to the main point. I have been with—whom do you think? Meister Richard Wagner. I will tell you all about it just as it happened. I will give you the very words in which I put it down in my diary:

"On Saturday, the 11th December, at half-past ten, I saw Richard Wagner for the second time, at the Imperial Hotel, where I stood for half an hour on the stairs awaiting his arrival. (I knew, you see, that on that day he would conduct the final rehearsal of his 'Lohengrin.') At last the Meister Richard came down from the second floor, and I accosted him very respectfully while he was still some little distance from me. He acknowledged it very affably. When he got to the door I ran forward quickly and opened it for him, whereupon he looked hard at me for a few seconds, and then went off to the rehearsal. I ran as fast as I could before the Meister, and got to the Opera House before Wagner arrived in his cab. I saluted

[1] This was the famous speech that aroused so much enmity against Wagner. After referring to the fact that it was in Vienna, in May 1861, that he heard his "Lohengrin" for the first time, he thanked the audience for its kindly reception of "Tannhäuser," which, he said, encouraged him to go on with the effort to make his works clearer to them, "so far as the forces at my disposal permit me." It is not quite clear what he meant by the last sentence; but the operatic artists looked upon it as a slight upon themselves, and the press took the same view of it.

him again, and would have opened the door for him; but before I could do so the driver jumped down quickly and opened it himself. Then Wagner said something to the driver; I think it was about me. I followed him to the stage door, but this time was not allowed to enter. (At the rehearsal of 'Tannhäuser' I was on the stage, where Wagner was.) As I had often waited for the Meister in the Imperial Hotel, I made the acquaintance of the manager of the hotel, who promised to befriend me with Wagner. Who could have been happier than I when he told me that I must come to him the same day, Saturday the 11th December, in the afternoon, when he would introduce me to the lady's maid of Frau Cosima (Wagner's wife, and daughter of the great Liszt) and Wagner's valet. I arrived at the appointed time; my attendance on the maid was very short. I was told to come again on Sunday, the 12th December, at about two o'clock. I went at the appointed time, but found the lady's maid, the valet and the manager of the hotel still at table, and at the end I drank a *kapuziner* with them. Then I went with the maid to the Meister's apartment, where I waited about a quarter of an hour before he came. At last he appeared, accompanied by Cosima, Goldmark, etc. (He had just come from a Philharmonic concert.) I saluted Cosima very respectfully; she did not however think it worth the trouble to bestow a look on me; she is indeed known everywhere as an extremely haughty and overbearing Dame. Wagner was going into his room without observing me, when the maid said to him in an entreating tone: 'Ah, Herr Wagner, a young artist, who has so often waited for you, would like to speak to you.' He came back, looked at me, and said, 'I have seen you once before, I think. You are . . .' (he was probably going to

say 'you are a fool'). Then he went in and opened the door for me into the sitting-room, that was furnished with truly royal magnificence. In the centre stood a couch, all velvet and silk. Wagner himself was enveloped in a long velvet cloak trimmed with fur. When I entered, he asked what it was I wanted.

"When I was alone with Wagner I said 'Honoured Meister! I have long cherished the wish to hear an opinion upon my compositions, and it would. . . .' Here the Master interrupted me, and said: 'My dear child, I really cannot give any opinion upon your compositions; I have far too little time just now,—I cannot even get my letters written. *I understand nothing at all about music.*' When I begged the Master to tell me if I would ever come to anything, he said: 'When I was as young as you are now, no one could say from my compositions whether I would go far in music. You must at least play me your compositions on the piano; but I have no time at present. When you are more mature and have written larger works and I am in Vienna again, you can show me your compositions. It's no use; I can give no opinion.' When I said to him that I took the classics as my models, he replied: 'Well, that's right; one can't be original all at once.' Then he laughed. Finally he said: 'I wish you, dear friend, much joy in your career. Just go on diligently, and when I come to Vienna again show me your compositions.' Thereupon I went away, deeply moved and impressed by the Master.

"On Tuesday the 14th December, at seven o'clock in the evening, the great Master left for Bayreuth. This is the end of the song."[1]

[1] Wagner, as a matter of fact, did not depart until the 16th. On the 15th he attended the performance of "Lohengrin" at the Opera.

Some of the German commentators upon this incident have taken a rather unkind view of Wagner's conduct, assuming that he was too egoistically immersed in his own compositions to be able to feel any interest in those of others. That, however, is taking the whole thing a little too seriously. Wagner could not know that the boy of fifteen who stood before him with a roll of manuscript in his hand was different from any other little boy of the same age with a liking for music. It is clear that Wolf himself did not think he had been badly treated. In later life he used to tell the story with some slight variations of detail. In 1890 he told the architect Friedrich Hofmann that Wagner looked at the roll of papers he had brought with him, and said in a friendly manner "*Piano* music? I don't understand that at all. If you ever write songs, then come and see me." When Hugo remarked that he was not yet an "independent," Wagner replied, "quite familiarly, as friend to friend," "Well, I also was not independent at one time. Look at my 'Rienzi'; there are some poor things there." Then he repeated: "When you have written something else, come back to me." Whatever view we may take of Wagner's conduct, the fact remains that Wolf always cherished afterwards not only a profound admiration for the Master's music but respect and affection for his personality. Dr. Decsey has found among Wolf's papers two old text-books of "The Flying Dutchman" and "Lohengrin," carefully annotated in a boyish hand, and showing every sign of eager study. We know, too, that in his maturer years for a Wagner score to fall into his hands meant a night snatched from sleep that he might read and re-read it. Once at his friend Eckstein's, where he used to play a good deal of Wagner on the piano, Wolf played through "Parsifal" and then closed the

instrument, declaring that no other music should be heard after this. Those who know how completely Wolf gave himself to any artist—poet or musician—for whom he had conceived an affection, and with what passionate devotion he clung to him, will be able to understand how large a place Wagner held in his thoughts. Dr. Decsey even assures us that Wolf's handwriting came in time to resemble Wagner's, a comparison of Wolf's caligraphy as a boy and as a young man conclusively proving Wagner's influence, though neither here nor in his music did Wolf lose his own personality in that of the older man.

His stay at the Vienna Conservatoire was comparatively short; he left in two years,—dismissed, the official records say, on account of a breach of discipline. It appears that he was more sinned against than sinning. Some wild youth had sent to Hellmesberger, the head of the Conservatoire, a letter warning him that he had only one more Christmas to enjoy, after which his end would come; the missive was signed with the name of Hugo Wolf. According to the account that seems most to be relied on,—that of Paul Müller, who had the story from the composer himself,—Hugo went to Hellmesberger to explain that the joke was not his. The scared Director raised an alarm; Wolf tried to establish his innocence by producing a specimen of his own handwriting, but could not obtain a hearing. Hellmesberger was firmly convinced that his life was in danger, and for some time the terrible Wolf—a desperate villain of seventeen or so—was kept under the eye of the Vienna police. He was of course at once banished from the Conservatoire.[1]

[1] In a short biographical account he gives of himself in a letter to Oscar Grohe on the 2nd May 1890, Wolf says he stayed a year at the Vienna Conservatoire, where he learned very little. He educated himself, he adds.

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Both Hugo and his father were greatly downcast at this turn of events; succeeding as it did so many records of failure at other schools, this dismissal seemed to set the seal of the vagabond upon the boy. He himself raged furiously at the authorities for placing on him the stigma of dismissal from an institution which he was only too anxious to leave; he talked, indeed, of bringing an action against them. But the fact remained that he was now outside the great Conservatoire, and that it would probably not have been easy for him to enter another even had he desired to do so. The boy had henceforth no other schools and no other masters than those he made for himself. Both in literature and in music he took his education into his own hands. He read voraciously everything he could get hold of, being guided by a singularly sure and catholic taste. He took up the study of music with intense earnestness, mostly extracting for himself the principles of structure and other points of technique directly out of the works of the great masters. The concerts at Vienna gave him plenty of material to reflect upon; we find him begging Felix Mottl to get him some pupils, so that he may live decently and be able to stay in Vienna, instead of spending the winter in Windischgraz where he will hear no music. The two brothers Josef and Franz Schalk—the former died in 1900, after having done good service in Wolf's cause, the latter is now the well-known Vienna conductor—befriended him and placed their musical possessions at his disposal. He spent day after day in the big Vienna library, absorbed in music of every kind, but chiefly that of Beethoven and of Bach, dissecting it, committing it to memory. One day, in later years, his friend Paul Müller called upon him and happened to see in his room a dilapidated copy of Beethoven's sonatas.

Turning the leaves over, he noticed many indications on them of careful study, and remarked upon them to Wolf. "Yes," said Wolf very seriously, "those were bad days. I lived at that time in a garret, and had no piano; so I used to take out the sonatas separately, and go and study them in the Prater." But to every composer and every piece of music that he took up he brought the same keenly critical intelligence, the same intuitive sense of relative values, the same enthusiasm for whatever was vital or characteristic. Schumann's songs in particular he examined most carefully and minutely. All the time he was studying the technique of his art from every possible standpoint, and working assiduously at the piano. As has been already stated, he never became a concert virtuoso on this instrument. But abundant testimony exists as to the extraordinary charm and power of his playing when the spirit moved him, especially when performing his own songs to a circle of personal friends. There is a story, too, of his going one day to a wedding, and, after many solicitations, sitting down at the piano and breaking out with the "March to the Scaffold" movement from Berlioz's "Fantastic Symphony." "He played the dreadful music with a realism that was positively terrifying. He represented the execution, suggested the scaffold and the blood, and made so demoniac an effect that the bride, who was standing by him in her wedding dress, fell down in a swoon. Wolf got up and left the house." The story is told by Friedrich Eckstein, who, however,—perhaps wisely,—does not vouch for the truth of every detail in it.

CHAPTER II

THE STRUGGLE WITH POVERTY

WE have seen that Wolf, at about the age of seventeen, was expelled from the Vienna Conservatoire. Resolved as he was to stay in Vienna in order to work out his musical destiny in his own way, he was now practically thrown upon his own resources. Remittances did indeed come occasionally from his father, but they were small,—certainly insufficient to maintain the boy in comfort. To keep the pot boiling he had to give piano and violin lessons. He had found some good friends in high places in Vienna musical society, notably Felix Mottl the conductor and Adalbert von Goldschmidt the composer, who assisted him to get a few pupils. The struggle must have been a severe one. It helped to make the boy's character, but probably the mental strain and the physical privations he had to suffer at this time had something to do with the sad collapse of his nervous system in later years. That he gloried, after his sturdy fashion, in his artistic independence is undoubted; but in his letters to his parents he preserves a tone almost of timidity, his object perhaps being, as his friend Hellmer suggests, not to wound, by too exuberant a display of joy, the father and mother who had so unwillingly given their consent to his residing in Vienna.

He speaks only vaguely of his small successes, and makes as little as possible of his more painful experiences, as though dreading the obvious rejoinder that he had only himself to blame for them.

It goes without saying that he was constitutionally unfitted for teaching, or at any rate for the kind of teaching he had to undertake at this time. Boy as he was in years, his musical nature was matured enough to create a wide gulf between himself and his pupils. He was probably impatient beyond the average of teachers at having to spend valuable time in labouring with children at the rudiments of piano technique; and it is not surprising to learn that he put this side of his duties out of sight as far as was possible, and gave his energies to teaching his pupils the wearisome, but not quite so wearisome, elements of musical theory. We have a record of what his behaviour could be at its worst in the case of a certain Fräulein G., to whom he had to teach the piano in the early eighties. She had apparently little musical talent, and Wolf found it hard to keep his temper with her. His language to her at times is said to have been more in keeping with the situation than with the conventions of polite society. He used to play duets with her, of a variety ranging from Beethoven symphonies to Lanner waltzes. When his patience was at an end he would angrily drive her from the piano, and play by himself long stretches of the music of his predilection, especially that of Berlioz. It ended with his refusing to teach her any longer, and telling her mother it would be the death of him to have anything more to do with so talentless a person. Conduct of this kind, comprehensible as it is to us, would hardly help him either to get new pupils or to keep old ones. His life was undoubtedly a hard

one at this time; while to his poverty he added a pride that made him resent and reject all offers of assistance in which the charitable intention was too obvious. Only when in the greatest need does he ask his parents to send him money. The loss of even one lesson, we can see, must have been rather serious for him. In April 1878 he tells his father that he has been reading Kuh's "Life of Hebbel," and, desperate as his own situation is, he congratulates himself on not being quite so badly off as the poet. Miserable as things are, he is thankful they are no worse. Another pupil has left him, the family having gone away for five weeks. He is living, he says, on one meal a day —soup, meat, and vegetables at one o'clock—and he has plans for saving the expense of eating at a restaurant by making his own coffee at home, adding to it a little home-made cake and a piece of ham or sausage. A year later he writes that his lessons bring him in on an average no more than thirty-six or thirty-eight gulden (about £3) per month,—not enough to pay for his lodgings, food, washing, and clothes. He begs his father to come to his support during May and June; next year, he says, he hopes to be certain of being able to maintain himself. In May there is the same pitiful story; he is living on bread-and-butter, and complains bitterly of having no money in his pocket. The next year, 1880, his affairs are still no better. Yet nothing could shake his determination to remain in Vienna, living in this way as best he could. From Windischgrâz, whither he had gone on a short visit to his people, he wrote in terms of great urgency to Mottl. His father, he says, has had business misfortunes and is not in a position now to help him very materially; Wolf therefore begs Mottl to get him some more pupils in Vienna.

HUGO WOLF IN HIS FOURTEENTH YEAR

HUGO WOLF IN HIS SEVENTEENTH YEAR

So year after year of sordid misery went by, until in the winter of 1883–4 Wolf thought seriously of emigrating to America. A friend who was on his way to the States had made all arrangements, and it was actually settled that Wolf should sail from Bremen; but at the last moment he changed his mind. He seems to have been making innumerable experiments in composition all this time. The Hugo Wolf-Verein in Vienna possessed a "Frühlingsgrüsse"—a song-setting of words by Lenau—and a few other works all dating from 1875. The following year was more prolific, the list including seven songs, among them three to words by Lenau (of whom he seems to have been especially fond at this time), and two to words by Goethe; six choruses, including the three for male voices already mentioned, set to poems by Goethe, apparently written for a male-voice choir in Windischgraz of which his father and his brother Max were members; two pianoforte sonatas, a rondo and fantasia for pianoforte, a piano piece for four hands, three movements of a symphony in B flat, and a movement from a string quartet,—all left in an unfinished state, and apparently little more than studies in the technique of composition. Of the same order was an arrangement for orchestra of most of Beethoven's "Moonlight" sonata, also made in 1876. Dr. Decsey notes the freedom and confidence of the instrumental style here; Wolf re-thinks the sonata in terms of the orchestra, accompanying the chief theme at the beginning of the sonata, for example, by a counterpoint in the violins above. In addition to this essay in orchestration he sketched out, but did not get very far with, a symphony in G minor. In 1877 there are more songs; among the papers Wolf left at his death were eleven vocal pieces—including settings of two

songs and three odes of Lenau, one of Matthison, one of Körner, and the *Morgentau*, which last he thought good enough to be published later on as the first of the *Sechs Lieder für eine Frauenstimme.* Besides these the year's work comprises piano pieces, the already mentioned concerto in D minor for violin and piano, and some orchestral sketches. In 1878 the boy seems to have come nearer realising his own powers and the best direction in which to exert them. Songs now abound; twenty of these were found after his death, among them six to Heine's words, three to Hebbel's, three to Lenau's, two to Chamisso's, two to Rückert's, and two to Hoffmann von Fallersleben's.

These show more grip and concentration than the earlier works. Twelve of them have been published as *Lieder aus der Jugendzeit*, and two more in the previously mentioned volume of *Sechs Lieder für eine Frauenstimme*; these are *Das Vöglein* (words by Hebbel), and *Die Spinnerin* (words by Rückert). The last-named in particular, which we shall refer to again, is an extraordinary achievement for a boy of seventeen or eighteen. The only orchestral composition belonging to this year is an unfinished setting of Kinkel's poem "Die Stunden verrauschen" for soli, chorus, and orchestra. In 1879, 1880, and 1881 he seems either to have had less time for composition, or to have destroyed most of what he wrote; there survive from these years only three songs after Lenau, Eichendorff and Heine (two of them mere fragments), and an "Albumblatt" for piano. While not claiming much final importance for the bulk of the youthful pieces found among Wolf's papers after his death, Dr. Decsey is careful to point out that these have survived only by accident, and that others have probably

perished.[1] Most of them are to be looked upon simply as preliminary studies in the technique of expression.

It will be noticed that Eichendorff's name appears for the first time in 1880 among those of the poets whom Wolf had set to music. Later on a volume of seventeen settings of Eichendorff, mostly dating from 1888, was to be published. In 1881 he set six spiritual songs for *a cappella* chorus,—naming them (not always in accordance with Eichendorff's titles) *Aufblick* ("Vergeht mir der Himmel"), *Einklang* (*Nachtgruss:* "Weil jetzo Alles still ist"), *Resignation* (*Der Einsiedler:* "Komm, Trost der Welt, du stille Nacht"), *Letzte Bitte* (*Der Pilger:* "Wie ein todeswunder Streiter"), *Ergebung* ("Dein Wille, Herr, geschehe"), and *Erhebung* ("So lass herein nun brechen die Brandung wie sie will"). The *Ergebung* was sung in the Vienna Votivkirche when Wolf was laid to rest on the 24th February 1903.

In 1881 he seems to have found his pinched and precarious financial condition no longer endurable, and to have sought a theatrical appointment that would at least give him a settled if meagre income. Adalbert von Goldschmidt accordingly set to work, with the result that Wolf was offered the post of second Kapellmeister at the Salzburg Stadttheater. He left Vienna in November. On the day of his departure he called upon Goldschmidt to say good-bye. In one hand he had a small neat bundle; under the other arm was a large and heavy object carefully wrapped up in paper. "This parcel he cautiously deposited in the ante-room. When, later on, Goldschmidt went out with Wolf, he noticed Wolf pick up the big mysterious object, and asked him what it was.

[1] About twenty other compositions have survived, but these bear no date.

Then Wolf opened the paper and disclosed a huge plaster bust of Wagner; the smaller bundle contained Wolf's personal belongings. Equipped in this style went the Kapellmeister to his first engagement."

At Salzburg the head Kapellmeister was Carl Muck, now a conductor of international reputation; finding the work too heavy for one man to do unaided, he had asked Leopold Müller, the director of the theatre, for an assistant. Wolf soon proved a disappointment to them both. His musical capacity was of course unquestionable; but so independent a musician, with his head full of ideas of his own, was not the best man to knock conventional operatic choruses into the heads of an ordinary theatre-troupe. Müller himself, who later on became the director of the Carl Theatre in Vienna, told Dr. Decsey that while they all recognised Wolf's musical endowments, he clearly lacked the necessary keenness and energy for a Kapellmeister's post; his self-absorbed, retiring ways were particularly ill-suited to the theatre. At the same time he did not neglect the letter of his duties, which were to assist at the rehearsals of soloists and chorus. To fulfil the spirit of them was another matter. Neither the *répertoire* nor the *personnel* of a small provincial theatre is the best of its kind, and Wolf could hardly be expected to take much interest in the rehearsing of operettas by Strauss and Millöcker. Once, we are told by Dr. Muck, Wolf came down in the morning to take the chorus through a Johann Strauss operetta. They had not been long at it before he contemptuously put the work on one side and told them he would rather play them something out of "Tristan,"—which he straightway proceeded to do. This was no doubt interesting and enjoyable, but hardly what he was engaged for. Nor could one expect him to

shine as a conductor of works which he must have held in secret contempt; so that altogether he was not a success as a Kapellmeister at Salzburg. He appears to have stayed there only a couple of months, returning to Vienna in January 1882. Here, as might be expected, he found it doubly difficult to live. So hard pressed was he indeed that for a while he took to vegetarianism as the cheapest way of living.

He seems to have composed comparatively little in 1882, with the exception of three songs which afterwards went with the *Morgentau*, *Das Vöglein* and *Die Spinnerin* to make up the set of *Sechs Lieder für eine Frauenstimme*. These were the delightful little *Mausfallensprüchlein*, written in June 1882, to words by Mörike, and the *Wiegenlied im Sommer* and *Wiegenlied im Winter*, both written in December of the same year, to words by Robert Reinick. Though he apparently composed little music during this year, it is interesting to see his thoughts turning, for the first time, towards the stage. It was not until thirteen years later that he was to write his first opera, *Der Corregidor*; but it was in 1882, probably as the result of his practical experience of the stage at Salzburg, that he began to think he had a gift for dramatic writing. Among his papers was discovered part of a sketch of a comic opera, going as far as the half of the second Act. In the light of his later partiality for southern subjects, as shown in *Der Corregidor* and *Manuel Venegas*, it is significant that his first libretto should also have been set in the same *milieu*. The manuscript fragment of it is now among the papers that came into the possession of the Vienna Hugo Wolf-Verein during the last illness of the composer. According to Dr. Decsey, the characters are the ordinary ones of comic opera—Don

Antonio, a rich nobleman, Don Alfonso, his brother (disguised as a Chaldean), Gregorio, a teacher of music, Donna Angela, and so on.

In the summer of 1882 Wolf went with Felix Mottl and another friend to Bayreuth, where he heard "Parsifal." His circle of acquaintances had now become a pretty wide one; some of his associates—such as Gustav Mahler—were, or afterwards became, men of high repute. In 1883 he made the acquaintance of Hermann Bahr, and went to live with him and another friend, a certain Dr. E. L., in the top storey of a building in the Trattnerhof, in the inner town. In the preface to the first volume of the *Gesammelte Aufsätze über Hugo Wolf*, published in 1898, Bahr gives a lively picture of the composer as he was in those days. Few, he says, suspected what Wolf was afterwards to become; most people looked upon him as a fool. Bahr and his companions lived a merry student's life, incarnadined the town o' nights, and usually returned home towards five in the morning, heavy with beer and the remains of their youthful spirits, and anxious only to lie down and sleep. The door would open and Wolf would appear in a very long nightdress, a candle and a book in his hands, very pale, scarcely visible in the grey uncertain light, with mysterious gestures, half satirical, half solemn. "He coughed shrilly and mocked us. Then he stepped into the middle of the room, swung the candle, and, while we undressed, began to read to us, generally something out of *Penthesilea*. This however had such power that we were silenced, not daring to speak another word, so impressive was he when reading. Like immense black birds the words came rushing and roaring from his pale lips; they seemed to grow till the room was full of their strong and terrible shadows. Suddenly he would

burst into laughter again, once more gibe at us, and slowly disappear through the door in his long, long shirt, the flickering candle in his outstretched hand. But we two sat up long, until the dawn came, and were vaguely conscious of something mysterious in the air around us, and knew that a great man had been with us."

The detailed account he gives of the impression made by Wolf's manner of reading poetry is of particular interest from the sequel, in which he shows how those who had heard Wolf recite verses could recognise in his settings of them the same keen sense of verbal values and of rhythmic accentuation. "Never in my life," he says, "have I heard such reading. It is impossible to describe it. I can only say this: when he spoke the words, they assumed a prodigious truth, they became corporeal things; we had, indeed, the feeling as if his own body had suddenly become an incarnation of the words, as if these hands, that we saw glimmering in the dim light, no longer belonged to a man, but to the words that we heard. He had as it were transubstantiated himself with all his body into the words of the poet. These stood before us, our friend had vanished.

"Then, wandering about Europe, I heard nothing of him for some time, until his Goethe songs appeared. These struck into the very depths of me; and then I suddenly remembered. Yes, it was the same! The same man as in those nights. Just as that time he sank as it were his own existence in that of the words, so that the gleaming hands and the threatening eyes which we saw seemed to be no longer his, but the hands and eyes of the words, which otherwise we should not have noticed, so this music could not have been 'added' by a man, but was

the natural music of the verses. We had had only imperfect ears, or we should always have heard it; since it is the essential music of these verses, it inheres in them and must always have been in them: he has only made it audible." All testimonies, indeed, go to prove the same thing, that Wolf read poetry aloud with exceptional power and understanding. His appreciation not only of the broad significance of a poem but of all its most delicate detail makes him unique among song writers; none other has anything like his scrupulous regard for his poetic material, none other so frankly accepts the poet as his starting-point, or makes it so completely his ideal to fit his music with perfect flexibility to every convolution of the verse. At his recitals, as we shall see later, he would often begin by reading the poem to the audience before a note of the music was allowed to be heard. This abnormally keen sense of poetic style, which was what made him Hugo Wolf indeed, came to him from no teacher; it was clearly congenital in him, and revealed itself markedly almost before he had attained to manhood. His taste in poetry was remarkably good. It showed itself incidentally about this time by his preoccupation with Kleist, one of the great gods of his Olympus. The tragedy "Penthesilea" had seized upon him, and in the summer and autumn of 1883 he cast his impressions of it into the form of a symphonic poem. In the summer of 1884 he was still polishing parts of this, as well as working at the music to another of Kleist's works, "Der Prinz von Homburg." For the rest he does not seem to have composed much at this time. To 1883 belong apparently only two songs — *Liebesbotschaft*, to a poem by Reinick, and *Zur Ruh, zur Ruh*, to a poem by Justinius Kerner. The latter was published in 1887 in a volume with five

others as *Sechs Gedichte von Scheffel, Mörike, Goethe und Kerner.*

He had the young composer's usual difficulties with the publishers. "Schott refuses in the most polite way," he wrote to Felix Mottl about this time, "to bring out my songs, and regrets all the more to have to refuse them as you had so warmly recommended them to him. I will now try my luck with Breitkopf and Härtel, for I cannot make up my mind, in spite of Hanslick's recommendation, to offer my compositions to Simrock." The idea of Hanslick recommending Wolf's compositions for publication seems rather incredible at first to those who know what Hanslick was, and how fiercely he fought against everything in Viennese musical life with which a man like Wolf would be especially in sympathy. Hanslick, however, did really exhibit a temporary interest in young Wolf. It had come about through a sculptor named Tilgner, who at that time lived in the same house as Hanslick. While admitting that Wolf was a little "untamed," he spoke highly of his artistic abilities to Hanslick, and told him of the young man's difficulty in finding a publisher. It was in response to this that the critic gave the recommendation to Brahms's publisher, Simrock. Wolf soon after met Hanslick, for the only time in their lives. We are not told, but we can guess, the impression each made on the other. Wolf's unwillingness to make use of Hanslick's recommendation must have been prompted by an instinctive feeling that there could never be any sympathy between them; he was no doubt unwilling to lay himself under an obligation to a man with whom his intuitions told him he was bound to come into collision some day. The collision was not long in coming; Wolf's critical work on the "Salonblatt," the story

of which is given in the next chapter, was for the most part an uncompromising declaration of war against the most cherished ideals of Hanslick and his circle. The older man not unnaturally tried to have his revenge later on when Wolf's name or work came before him.

CHAPTER III

MUSICAL CRITIC OF THE "SALONBLATT"

AT the beginning of 1884 Wolf came prominently before the Viennese public, but in another rôle than that of composer. A fashionable paper—the Vienna "Salonblatt"—had just lost its musical critic, Theodor Helm. Some friends of Wolf, anxious no doubt to provide him with an occupation that would bring him a regular income, however small, managed to get him installed in the vacant post. His first article appeared in the issue of the 27th January 1884; his connection with the paper lasted about four years. The journal is said to circulate chiefly among the fashionables and would-be fashionables of Vienna. Wolf's strong and acid writing must have seemed, among the generally "frivolous confectionery" of the rest of the paper, rather like the irruption of a fanatical dervish into a boudoir. He had very decided tastes and a not less decided way of giving expression to them; indeed he wrote singularly well, with thorough technical knowledge, and with ardent enthusiasm for whatever he thought was great and sincere art, and abundant irony and invective for whatever he was convinced was not. As a rule the last person to be capable of being a good critic is an original composer; the very strength of his own individuality is apt to render him only moderately receptive of

the contrasted art of other men. Wagner's constitutional bias towards seeing life through Wagner's eyes made him incapable of seeing it through those of Brahms. Tchaikovski again missed the meaning and the beauty of Brahms's music as completely as a being organised to perceive space in only two dimensions would misconceive the shapes of objects that exist in three; while Brahms in his turn often had as little sense of the fragrance and colour of Tchaikovski's music as a scentless chemist has of the odour of a flower. It must be recorded to Wolf's credit that, so far as one can judge now from the criticisms of his that have been republished, and assuming that those we cannot procure are of the same order, he showed on the whole, like Schumann, an admirable catholicity of taste in his dealings with the music of other men. He could have had no training as a critic,—no training even in the preliminary art of looking twice at every judgment, summoning up hypothetical witnesses against it, and then deciding as to its final reasonableness. When he was right he was so by instinct — the instinct of a finely organised nature willing to enjoy keenly whatever could appeal to it as being beautiful.

As to the tone and manner of his criticism, while it was natural that those who suffered under his whip should sometimes feel indignant, one must do him the justice to admit that there was often very good reason for his bitterness, his irony and his heat. While admitting that musical criticism is of no value unless it sees all round a given case, and states not only its disagreement, when agreement is not possible, but the reason for its disagreement, one cannot subscribe to the further theory, held by many worthy people, that the writing should never show any signs of internal warmth, and that every word should

be struck out that is likely to wound. So colourless an ideal of the duty of the critic can in the last resort only be held by men for whom the art-life consists merely in enjoying the better products and ignoring the worst, who are not keenly enough interested in progress to go out and fight for it, and who do not realise that bad art *cannot* safely be ignored, for the simple reason that it debauches the public taste and so makes it harder for better art to find eyes to look at it and ears to listen to it. It is as unwise, in fact, to lay down merely one rule for newspaper criticism as it would be to lay down only one rule for war. Your strategy must be suited to the enemy and to the situation; you cannot fight every battle with the same technique. There is a time to sit down patiently outside a citadel, reduce it by a long and scientific siege, and then live on good terms with your quondam enemies; there is also a time to take the position by assault, to sweep a dangerous and hopelessly irreconcilable enemy away in one charge. Criticism of this kind—and this, apparently, is what the advocates of what they miscall "restraint" do not perceive—can be just as well reasoned, just as comprehensive in its survey, as any criticism that is written at half the mental temperature. It does not necessarily follow that because a man is warm he must be illogical; he may glow with anger at something that seems to him to call for unsparing condemnation, and yet see the whole case with unclouded eyes and reason with pitiless logic, preserving a little core of intellectual ice at the centre of the emotional heat. And that there are occasions in newspaper musical criticism when the critic must express himself with warmth will be denied only by those who have never been brought face to face with some of the problems that beset the critic day by day,—the dealing,

for example, with impudent incompetence, or the cynicism that looks upon the public only as a milch cow to be drained for personal profit, or the charlatanism that plays upon the half-educated instincts of the musically illiterate. It were folly to treat things of this kind with the same courtesy, the same toleration as honest effort that may not quite reach the goal it aims at.

In every town, no matter how active may be its musical life, there will always be a good deal in the state of the music to anger or sadden the idealist. Wolf was an idealist,—a very young one, too, who had yet to learn how hard it is to move the mass of men by sheer reason, —and he found plenty of things in the musical life of Vienna to keep him perpetually in the saddle with his lance always at full tilt. No one now disputes that in the early eighties Vienna, as far as music was concerned, was a city of many prejudices and much ignorance, particularly with regard to Wagner and the modern school of poetic music. Part of it may have been due to a conservatism of the better kind, a real and instructed enthusiasm for the antique; but besides this there was a great deal of sheer ignorance and unwillingness to learn. Wagner was not understood, nor Liszt, nor Berlioz, nor Bruckner; and as these were Wolf's preferences among composers living or recently dead, it was inevitable that he should run counter to the prejudices of musical Vienna at almost every turn.

With the charming comprehensiveness of youth he took the whole artistic life of the city under his paternal care; there was no department of it in which he was not willing to point out the need for improvement and to give gratuitous advice as to how the improvement could be effected. He loved to urge upon concert-givers the

necessity of being a little more adventurous in the compiling of their programmes. In one of his articles he pretends to have stood behind a man who was reading the poster announcing the concert of the week, and to have listened to his soliloquy—

"Bach, Mozart, Haydn, Beethoven,—good, good. The public loves classical music. Beethoven, Mozart, Haydn are really everyday matters with it. But Bach. . . . Ah, Bach! (Here he mimicked scornfully the ecstasy of the public.) Ah! Bach! Ay, that's music. All granite, bronze! Everywhere profundity, originality, greatness, sublimity, genius! (Then in a natural tone)—in faith! I believe that the Philharmonic public would rather jump into the Pontine marshes than listen to a work of this belauded master. But what would not people do for the sake of fashion? Bach has become the fashion with the Philharmonic public. . . . Robert Fuchs? Aha! another serenade? No, a symphony. Robert Volkmann? very likely a symphony? no, a serenade. Next year it will be the other way about; a symphony by Volkmann, a serenade by Fuchs. Well and good. There must be variety, and the Philharmonic people are connoisseurs in that, in all conscience! 'Penthesilea,' by Goldmark. A splendid subject for a musical setting; but the talent of the composer is not equal to the weight of the theme. Only a Makart could have represented a Penthesilea in colour, only a Liszt or a Berlioz in music. It is beyond anyone else. But what's this? Can I believe my eyes? Berlioz? 'Symphonie fantastique?' No! really? Impossible; yet there it is, clear enough—'Symphonie fantastique' by Hector Berlioz. Truly there is something positively Spartan in the courage of the Philharmonic people. They have the pluck to scare their subscribers."

He returned more than once to the charge against the Philharmonic Society. It had, he said, nothing to fear in the way of competition, and could therefore easily afford to give more works which the public did not know but ought to know—those of Liszt and Berlioz, for example. The public might be ruffled at first, but would take to the new music in time. In one of his articles he addressed a sarcastic appeal to the conductor—

"Gade, Dvořák, Molique, and out of charity—what a gigantic effort!—a symphony of Mozart. Bravo, Herr Kapellmeister! You exhibit taste, good intentions, industry, devotion, zeal, perseverance, and a good supply of ambition. What is it all to lead to? Won't you climb to the dizzy height of producing the youthful symphonies of Haydn? Do you dread the labour it would take, the sleepless nights, the bloody sweat? . . . No, Herr Kapellmeister: you must take care of yourself, nurse yourself; you need rest. . . . Go on making us happy with Dvořák rhapsodies, Gade overtures, Molique 'cello concertos. Why have a Mozart symphony at the end?—and of all things the superb one in E flat? This work is too complicated. . . . You are ruining your system with rehearsals, and then the prospect of hearing you conduct Czerny's 'School of Velocity' (the instrumentation of which Herr B. should be obliging enough to undertake) would be taken away from us for ever."

Wolf's own ideals are incidentally stated in an article entitled "From the Diary of a Chinaman." He dreams that he is in Pekin, acting as manager of the court theatre. He means to reform everything: "only good works shall henceforth be given, and in the most perfect way possible; the theatre shall be closed twice a week so that the conductor may have proper time for rehearsal; the

HUGO WOLF IN HIS TWENTY FIFTH YEAR

auditorium is to be rebuilt, the ballet reduced, and the claque banished"; and so on. Then his troubles begin. He looks at himself in the glass after a little time. "Face alternating in colour between the mellowest sea-green and the most agreeable sulphur-yellow; cranium bald, with one thin, dirty-white tuft of hair fluttering like a flag of truce; eyes hollow; ears hanging down; back bent; great Heaven! what an abject appearance! But, as I soon had to recognise to my horror, this estimable physical appearance had its analogue in my spiritual condition. As I recollect, this singular physical and mental change in me happened a little while after that memorable address which was to indicate the programme of the great concert which I contemplated conducting after being appointed to the post. . . . But what was the result of these beneficial projects? First of all a conspiracy, then a revolution. . . . The perspiration streamed from my forehead. I longed for death. . . . In my despair I laid hands on myself, but, in the very act of strangling myself, my outrageously clumsy way of managing it brought me—Heaven be thanked—back into waking consciousness."

In other articles he fulminated against the Philistines who at every concert in every town spoil one's enjoyment either by entering or leaving during the performance or by the crude noise of their applause after delicate music. He advocated a smaller theatre for comic opera, wherein the true proportions of that *genre* might be preserved,—Lortzing's "Waffenschmied," for example, being overweighted in the large opera house like a trim little picture in a huge frame; he declared that in spite of the poverty of the orchestra, the voices, and the appointments at the Salzburg theatre, the work used there to make an impression on him more like the proper one than it did in the

Vienna opera house, where everything was as sumptuous as it could be. In the same spirit he pleaded for a smaller concert room for chamber music.

In the Vienna of that time there were two main parties—the Wagnerian, who regarded Bruckner as their standard-bearer, and the anti-Wagnerians, who of course found a leader, though not altogether a willing one, in Brahms. Against the latter Wolf directed some of his sharpest criticisms. Temperamental antipathy will account for some of them, but they contain a good deal that is keenly analytical and objectively true. He always agreed with Nietzsche that Brahms's melancholy was the melancholy of impotence. "The true test of the greatness of a composer," he said once to Eckstein, "is this,—*can he exult?* Wagner can exult; Brahms cannot."[1] In an article *à propos* of a performance of Brahms's third symphony in November 1884 he contrasts the work with the second symphony of Beethoven, wherein he finds the "originality," the promise for the future, that is lacking in the other. "Brahms," he says, "is an epigone of Schumann and Mendelssohn. He is a clever musician, very skilled in counterpoint, to whom ideas of all kinds come—sometimes good, now and then excellent, occasionally bad, here and there already familiar,—frequently no ideas at all. Schumann, Chopin, Berlioz, Liszt, the leaders of the revolutionary movement in music after Beethoven (in which period Schumann indeed expected a Messiah and thought he had found him in—Brahms) have passed by our symphonist without leaving a trace on him; he was, or pretended to be, blind when the eyes of astonished mankind were opened by the dazzling genius of Wagner,

[1] In some of his letters to Kauffmann in 1890 he discusses Brahms again; he then held him to be deficient in the capacity for really deep feeling.

who, like Napoleon, borne on the waves of the revolution, turned them by his despotic power into new channels. . . . Just as people at that time danced minuets, *i.e.* wrote symphonies, so Herr Brahms also writes symphonies regardless of what has happened in the meantime. He is like a departed spirit that returns to its old house, totters up the rickety steps, turns the rusty key with much difficulty, and directs an absent-minded gaze on the cobwebs that are forming in the air and the ivy that is forcing its way through the gloomy windows."

There is an element of truth in the criticism, although it does not give a completely rounded view of Brahms. Wolf was on safer ground when he picked holes in some of the scansions in Brahms's songs, particularly in the "Vergebliches Ständchen." On the other hand, his freedom from conscious prejudice was shown in the fact that he often spoke warmly of such works of Brahms as pleased him,—the song "Von ewiger Liebe," for example, the G major sextet—which he admired in spite of the contrapuntal aridity of the last movement—and the F major quintet. "Here," he says in a criticism of 1884 upon the quintet, "the imagination of the composer revels in picturesque images; there is no trace here of the chill November fogs that elsewhere hang over his compositions and stifle each warm call of the heart before it can really ring out; all is sunshine, now clearer, now more veiled; a magical emerald-green is diffused over this fairy-like picture of spring; everything flourishes greenly and puts forth buds,—we can really hear the grass growing; Nature is so mysterious, so solemnly still, so blissful and radiant. . . . In the second movement the shades fall lower. Evening and then gradually night enfold the fantastic forms that moved about so wonderfully in the

first movement. Deep meditation and silence. An animated form goes chirping through the deep solitude. It is as if glow-worms were going through their dances, by the way it sparkles and flashes in the flying figures of the instruments. But the form vanishes. The earlier silence comes, once more to be broken in upon by a similar motive. The mysterious tone-picture dies away in curious harmonies, that modulate between dreaming and waking."

Though he passionately admired Bruckner and knew him personally, he kept an open mind towards his music, and criticised it with a good deal of coolness and detachment. "It is a deficiency on the intellectual side," he says, "notwithstanding all their originality, greatness, imagination and inventiveness, that makes the Bruckner symphonies so hard to understand. Everywhere a will, a colossal purpose, but no satisfaction, no artistic solution." On the whole, however, he thought Bruckner the greatest figure that had appeared in the symphony since Beethoven —an opinion in which he became more and more confirmed as time went on.[1]

Of the older musicians he wrote with special enthusiasm upon Gluck, Beethoven, Haydn, Mozart, Weber, Marschner, Schubert, and Schumann, always seizing the special characteristic of each. The moderns brought out the bias of his own temperament. He did not like any music that savoured too strongly of narrow "nationalism," and so was not greatly drawn to Gade, Grieg, or the general crowd of Scandinavian, Bohemian, or Russian composers;

[1] He frequently discusses Bruckner's works in his correspondence with Kauffmann. See the letters of 15th December 1891, 23rd December 1892, and 10th March 1893. He always admits Bruckner's lack of concentration, but admires the prodigality of his invention and the expressiveness of his ideas.

he admired, however, Smetana, Glinka, and Tchaikovski. For the modern Italian opera-writers he had little but contempt. He abhorred Boïto's "Mefistofele" on account both of the weakness of the music and of the perversion that Goethe's poem had undergone in the text. Ponchielli's "Gioconda" was another *bête noire* to him; the composer, he said, had no originality; "he has a dozen physiognomies; his imagination proceeds like a stubborn ass, that after every second step goes back upon the first. 'La Gioconda' is composed merely for the singers, not for the public."

Of French composers he was especially fond of Berlioz, of whom he always wrote with the keenest and most sympathetic understanding, at the same time discriminating between the weaker works, such as the "Lear" overture, and the great ones like the "Symphonie fantastique" and the "Cellini" overture. Of Saint-Saëns he particularly liked the trumpet septet. He does not seem to have written much upon Bizet, but we know that he greatly admired "Carmen." The executant artists he heard were discussed with sound good sense. He spoke enthusiastically of Richter, and of the performances Bülow gave with the Meiningen orchestra. He also liked Bülow's rendering of Beethoven on the piano, placing him above Rubinstein in this respect. But the pedagogic element in Bülow's playing, to which Weingartner has also drawn attention, gradually became distasteful to him; Bülow, he said, was like a man who wanted to be a painter but only succeeded in becoming a professor of anatomy,—he gave piano lectures instead of piano recitals. Wolf also saw all that was good and all that was lacking in the styles of other pianists, such as Arthur Friedheim, D'Albert, and Rosenthal. He hit some of

them off in very neat epithets—Liszt was the lion of the piano, Rubinstein the tiger, Friedheim the panther, Rosenthal the devil. He saw Satan again in the violin technique of César Thomson, especially in his demoniacally clever octave playing.

Altogether he seems to have gone about the business of criticism with a clear head, and with eyes at least as unprejudiced as those of the average musical critic. Yet in many ways it can only be regretted that he should have had to spend four years of his life in this way. As he himself once said, the creative artist should keep out of criticism. That he made so many enemies was not the worst of the evil in his case; the physical strain and the mental distraction must have retarded his own development as a composer, and probably deprived the world of a great deal of original work for which it would gladly have foregone his criticisms upon the works of others.

CHAPTER IV

THE GROWTH TO MASTERY

SOON after the termination of his first season as critic, in April 1884, Wolf left Vienna for a holiday in Northern Styria. His brother-in-law, Josef Strasser, an inspector of taxes, lived in Schloss Gstatt near Öblarn, in the department of Gröbming; there Wolf went to spend the summer. His sister Modesta and her husband knew his habits, and for the most part left him quite free to live as he chose; he even preferred to prepare his own strong black coffee in the afternoon in his own room. He spent his time between the piano, composition, long walks in the mountains,—generally with a volume of his beloved Kleist, —and short excursions to holiday resorts in the neighbourhood. On one of these he was immensely amused at a poet he met, whom he caught in the act of composing by the aid of a rhyming dictionary. Kleist's "Penthesilea" kept its usual hold upon him; but at this time he occupied himself more closely with another work of the poet, "Der Prinz von Homburg," which he meant to make the subject of a large orchestral work. The *Trauermusik* was completed, but has not yet been published; the manuscript of it is now among the papers acquired by the Vienna Hugo Wolf-Verein. Friedrich Eckstein, who often heard Wolf, in later years, render the music on the

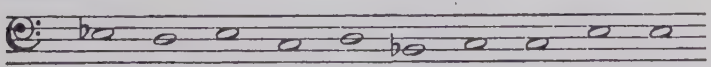
piano, spoke of it with admiration. Wolf was also very enthusiastic during his stay in Gröbming over Kleist's fine comedy "Der zerbrochene Krug," and used to read it to Modesta with his usual dramatic power; but there is no evidence that he thought of it in connection with music. His external life during the summer was quite uneventful. The most notable event in it seems to have been the reception of a letter from Liszt, which he one day showed to Strasser in high glee. Wolf had sent the old musician a composition,—apparently the string quartet in D minor, written in 1879,—and the great Liszt, with his usual regal kindliness, had not only read it and marked on the margin what seemed to him a necessary correction, but had written an encouraging letter to the young composer.

In the autumn he was back again in Vienna, in a new domicile on the fourth storey of a building in the Kumpfgasse, that pleased him very much, he wrote to his sister, because for the first time he had a room lying away from the stairs, and approached by a small anteroom. In the same street was a piano shop, from which he could borrow an instrument. He intends to retain this residence all through the summer, he says, since rooms in the middle of the town at so reasonable a price—twenty-four florins per month with service included—were very hard to find. His living-room is a large one,—so large that when Strasser comes to see him a second bed can easily be placed in it. Evidently his circumstances were still exceedingly poor,—Dr. Decsey thinks that a certain advertisement in the "Salonblatt" offering to teach piano, harmony, counterpoint, etc., was his, —but he faced his hard life, now as always, with admirable toughness of spirit. He was too much absorbed in his work to care for much else; he would probably have been content to live with a frugality that would be deprivation to

most other men, even most other artists, if only it carried with it the privilege of being able to give himself up to his composition without disturbance and without anxiety. Nowhere in his letters is there evidence of the smallest appetite for social luxury; even when, in later years, he stayed in the houses of wealthy people like Baron Lipperheide, he seems to have felt the constraint of life of this kind rather than the elegance and the comfort of it, and to have been comparatively unhappy until he found himself once more alone and free.

In the same letter in which he tells his brother-in-law of his new rooms, he encloses an article on Marschner's "Der Vampyr"—a favourite opera of his—and gives a quaint account of how he wrote it. It was done after a banquet at Frau R.'s; it took him from two o'clock in the morning until the dawn, with the aid of half a bottle of whisky that left him rather tipsy. "You will easily understand," he says, "that under such conditions nothing very exceptional can be expected."

All this time he was trying to get something or other published, but found every door closed to him. One publisher seems, from a letter of Wolf's to Strasser of 21st January 1885, to have made him a definite promise and then broken it; whereupon Wolf consoles himself with Berlioz's philosophical reflection—"Let us raise ourselves above the misery of life; let us shake off from us all black thoughts, and sing in a bright voice the well-known lively refrain"—



After the season of 1884–5 he again longed to revisit his native parts, but this time was unable to do so. In a

letter to Strasser of 9th June 1885, full of warm-hearted protestations of affection, he says that he must spend the summer at Döbling, near Vienna, instead of going to Strasser's house. "I urgently need a piano, in order to complete some larger works[1] by the autumn. I must be able to make use of the instrument at any hour I choose, and that would hardly be possible at Gröbming. To have one brought from Ischl would not suit my consumptive purse, and since in Vienna the house of a friend, with a piano in it, is at my disposal, my savings should just suffice to keep life going until the commencement of the season. Still I will not be untrue to my resolution to visit you for a few days; only I cannot yet tell you definitely when I shall leave here. It would please me most to meet you in Aussee. Perhaps you will go there in the course of next month. We will make arrangements about this later on. Good-bye. If you need or wish for books, write me. If you have leisure for reading, I will introduce you to a wonderful novel of Thackeray. . . ."

On the 15th of the month he writes declining Strasser's offer to get a room for him in Aigen, but promising to go to Gröbming for a couple of days at the end of July or the beginning of August. Meanwhile he had gone into his new quarters,—the house in the Mehlmarkt which his friend Köchert, who had already shown him many kindnesses during the past six years, had placed at his disposal for the summer.

Tied to Vienna as he was, his mind went out all the more longingly to Gröbming. On the 23rd July he

[1] What these "larger works" were cannot be discovered. Wolf seems to have done little composing that summer; but Dr. Decsey thinks he may have intended to carry out his old plan of setting "Der Prinz von Homburg" to music.

addressed another letter, full of affection, to Strasser: "What is the matter with you? I long to hear from you again. Where are you fixed now? To-day I was rummaging about among my manuscripts, and found several that were scribbled at Schloss Gstatt. Schladming, with the date of 30th August, is immortalised (!?) on a sheet besmeared with a sketch from the Trauermarsch from 'Der Prinz von Homburg.' What wonderful memories arise in me at the sight of these leaves! The time I spent in Gstatt was the most beautiful of all my life. I would give up my chance of salvation right away just to live with you, as I did then, a modest but soulful, contented life. This year I shall sadly miss you and Modesta and your youngsters. I am quite wild about it. How is your family? I hear nothing at all about them. Give me at any rate the address of Modesta, that I may write to her some time. My dear, dear friend, I *must* see you this year! By the Lord, I am a hard-boiled fellow, but when I think of you and the others I become as soft as butter. It is as a rule not in my line to be *larmoyant*, but you, with your boundless simplicity and goodness of heart, could make me sob like two thousand mill-wheels. . . . Write me by return. I count the minutes until I have a letter from you in my hands. If I get my work finished, I will come next month to you."

About this time, however, Strasser was transferred from Gröbming to Murau, in the Mur Valley, while his wife had to settle in Klagenfurt for the schooling of the four children. On the 1st August Wolf writes to his brother-in-law at Murau, reproaching him for not having given him some previous inkling of this change of residence. He cannot, he says, go to see Strasser before the middle

of the month, since he is over head and ears in his work.

During the following autumn Wolf seems to have made heroic attempts to have some of his works performed. He was destined, as so many other young composers have been before and since, to meet with more promises than performances, and to experience all the extremes of hope and disappointment. At Christmas 1885 he writes to Strasser to explain his long silence; he has, he says, been waiting till he could communicate some important news that would have given pleasure to his sympathetic brother-in-law. "I waited, waited, waited,—until to-day; but I was only fed with prospects, hopes, assurances, and fine things of that kind, that do indeed stimulate the appetite pleasantly, but leave the stomach empty. I have good prospects of my *Penthesilea* in Munich and. . . .[1] It must be settled by the end of January. Pray for me. As for what became of my string quartet, the enclosed article of the 23rd October will throw light on that matter for you. It (*i.e.* the article) has raised a good deal of dust."

What was the article that had raised all this dust? In September Wolf had offered his quartet for performance to the Rosé Quartet Society in Vienna. For some unknown reason it had been declined, a fact of which Wolf was notified in October. He gave expression to his disappointment in an article in the "Salonblatt," entitled "Music?" in which a note of bitterness can be heard piercing through the humour—

"There is scarcely anything more afflicting than to see ever so modest a wish never satisfied; and yet nothing so much occupies men as anxiety or confidence as to the

[1] The name of the town is omitted by Dr. Decsey.

fulfilling of their wishes and hopes. It makes men fools, or drunkards, or misanthropes, or astrologers, or misers, or treasure-seekers, or debtors, or exorcists, or lyric poets, or loafers, or unfortunate lovers, even journalists (like myself, for instance), and God only knows what other useful and delightful things. In truth, one should, in order to escape inconveniences of this kind, maintain as cool a relation as possible towards one's wishes and hopes, . . . one should appoint hours of audience for such pretentious visitors, and keep these hours of audience so unpunctually that the proper respect which each rascal entertains for himself may not suffer thereby.

"When I think of the terrible word *No*, which, delivered in the purest unison by four sturdy men's voices, made the very walls tremble, a similar situation in Gluck's 'Orpheus' seems to me in comparison quite a paltry affair. Indeed a refusal by two voices moving in smooth thirds, while the third accompanies with nice contrapuntal turns (or in this case, we should say, twists),[1] and the fourth would keep behind as a neutral power, counting the pauses, would have agreed with me incomparably more sympathetically.

"Gentlemen! have pity on us poor composers! Do not bellow in unison when you condemn a work; divide yourselves into particles, so far as you possibly can, but do not permit yourselves to send by letter to hopeful authors such blasphemous, preposterous stuff by way of unanimous decision against this or that of their works. Train yourselves in politeness and mildness. Fill your coat pockets with onions; or—if you have imagination enough to set your fountains in play in this manner—you need only think of

[1] The antithesis is clearer in the German — "Wendungen" and "Windungen."

the story of the prodigal son, of the suspended Absalom, of Joseph in the pit, of Jonah in the whale's belly, of the sickness of the famous drunkard Noah, of the painful end of good queen Cleopatra, or of any other sad episode in Biblical history. . . ." The humour, it will be observed, is a little heavy; Wolf must have been in a very bad temper indeed to make so laborious an attempt to seem easy.

The manuscript of this string quartet came to a bad end; Wolf left it in a tramcar and never recovered it. Many years afterwards, however, the Hugo Wolf-Verein came into possession—it is not said how—of a string quartet in D minor, which is supposed to be the one lost in 1885. This is the quartet now published, bearing the inscription from Goethe's "Faust," "Entbehren sollst du, sollst entbehren." It was first played in February 1903, with immediate success.

The remainder of the letter to Strasser, of which the beginning has been quoted on a previous page, gives us a painful sense of the poverty in which Wolf was living at this time: he had sent his brother-in-law as a present the "Onkel Benjamin" of Claude Tillier, with an inscription on the title-page.

"For Christmas I would willingly have sent you a grand present,—an earthly kingdom or a heavenly one, as you deserve. In the meanwhile, however, you will be able to feel quite comfortable in the little world of 'Onkel Benjamin.' I have long meant to buy the book for you; now that the lovely Christmas-time stands on the threshold of the New Year, the reading of this book will make up to you for all the disappointments of the year that is departing. Equipped with a philosophy like that which is always at the command of the incomparable Onkel

Benjamin, you will make your way through life in a cheerful spirit, bold and undaunted. You will look the new year laughingly in the eyes, and if it should make a face at you you will laugh at it more than ever. Friend! impress this book on your mind; a good deal may be learned from it, especially in your circumstances. The little world into which you are banished is also Benjamin's. This will especially endear the book to you. Certainly, my dear fellow, you will be well able to extract as much benefit from this book, as it will bring you comfort. Only read it very, very often, and write me how it pleases you, when you have been through it a few times. Look upon it as your grace at table, your morning and evening devotions. Learn it by heart, as I have done. Rejoice in it.

"I would gladly have enriched the Christmas tree of your dear children, but I am so poor that not even the devil could get anything out of me. Upon my soul! It has not gone so badly with me for a long time . . . and since I live only by my pen, and have scarcely any other casual earnings, things are pitiably bad with me. Is Modesta with you, or still in Klagenfurt? I have not heard from her for five months. When you write to her, tell her that I think of her and her children innumerable times, and that I am very sad that I cannot contribute something to the Christmas tree."

The previous year he had sent a small present to each of the children, while excusing himself from sending the elders anything on the ground that he was "a poor devil"; this winter he could only send the father a small book, the children receiving nothing. He must indeed have been pathetically poor.

The symphonic poem *Penthesilea* had met with no better luck in Munich than Wolf's other works elsewhere.

On 25th January 1886 he writes to Strasser: "My *Penthesilea* was not accepted in Munich; whether it will get a performance in . . . . Heaven only knows. In the meanwhile it ought to satisfy me that my string quartet is to be played before a private company at Goldschmidt's. The performance before an invited audience, numbering about sixty or eighty persons, takes place on Sunday week. . . ." The projected performance, however, apparently never took place; Goldschmidt at any rate could never recollect one having been given at his house.

On the 12th May Wolf writes to Strasser that he intends to visit him next month, and asks for full details as to the presents he must bring for each of the family. He arrived at Murau on the 12th June. The visit, however, to which he had looked forward so delightedly was destined to be an unhappy one. The weather was cold, wet and gloomy, which in itself was enough to put Wolf slightly out of tune, so sensitive was he to atmospheric conditions. Then, while he was unpacking his trunk, the clumsiness of someone or other in the house caused a dart from a toy that he had brought for the children to fly into his eye, causing him great pain. He had to spend most of his time in a darkened room, and Strasser his in reading to him. The Fates further willed it that the children should be ill, and that his sister should have brought a daughter into the world three days before his arrival. We can imagine how all this wrought upon his irritable nerves. The last straw was laid on him when he was asked to stand sponsor to the newly-born child at its baptism. The horror of the situation seems to have worked to such an extent on Wolf that at midday he disappeared, presumably into the woods, and was seen no more that day or that night. Evidently he had fallen

a victim—as the artistic temperament, with its strong imagination and its weak will, is so prone to do—to some mood of the moment that discoloured the whole of life for him. The clouds passed away during the night, and in the morning Strasser found a note from him lying on the dining-room table—

"I would like to fall weeping on your neck, and on yours, Modesta. I am thoroughly unhappy and at the same time furious with myself. Pity me, for now I know for certain that it is my lot to grieve everyone who loves me and who is dear to me. It is unhappily not the first time that I find myself in such a state of mind; that is the saddest part of it all. It has brought me the conviction that my disposition is and always will be a thoroughly morbid one.

"What would I not give could I have done you the small service of acting as godfather to your child! And believe me, in myself I was quite prepared to do so; but then a devil (I harbour legions of them inside me) whispered in my ear that I should not do it, since that would distress you. I agreed at once, and when I saw how much it meant to you I hesitated more that ever. And yet—at midday to-day I wanted to open my mouth and tell you that I am ready and happy to do anything; then I saw your sulky faces, and they knocked it all out of me.

"Now laugh at me, my dearest, I beg of you, for you will have to look a long while through the world before you find such a splendid specimen of a fool as your honourable brother-in-law, who really cherishes you and your wife in his soul.

"Just imagine; I had again made the resolution to leave you, since I am much too disgusted with myself.

"I shall not see you any more to-day, since I cannot bring myself to look in your face. Burn this letter and don't speak to me about the affair again. *Au revoir* till early to-morrow morning. Good-night."

The next morning all was well; Wolf, his devil exorcised, clothed and in his right mind, resumed his ordinary life, walked, dreamed, enjoyed nature, read poetry, thought out his songs, and was so far reconciled with the infant who had unconsciously caused all this trouble as to tender the bottle to it in the absence of its mother. His stay in Murau lasted some four months. For a great part of the time he read deeply in Mörike. One day he came to Strasser with the news that he had set the "Gebet" to music,—first of all pretending in jest that the poem also was his own, and that he was going to be "a little Wagner."

Soon after his return to Vienna, his *Penthesilea* was tried over by the Philharmonic Society on the 15th October, with the object of seeing whether it should be put down for a concert performance. Wolf sat unobserved in the hall. His anger at what he took to be a base travesty of his work found vent three days later in a letter to Strasser and his sister—

"What I have been through in the last few days you cannot even imagine. I am loaded like a dynamite bomb, and woe to anyone who comes within reach of my wrath!

"What does it matter to me if I blow myself up as well, so long as I know that my shot sends to the devil all the . . . who have irritated me so much; they shall be roasted in the brimstone of hell and steeped in the poison of dragons; I have sworn they shall. I will do an article against . . . that will make the devil himself

turn pale. O! there shall be such a cry of rage through . . . as a squalling Indian baby could not equal. But listen:

"Last Friday my *Penthesilea* was given at the rehearsal of novelties. MY *Penthesilea?* No; the Penthesilea of a madman, an idiot, a joker, or whatever else you will, but it was not MY *Penthesilea.* I can't describe to you how the work was played."

The next portion of the letter, says Dr. Decsey, is too strongly-worded and too personal in its references to be reproduced textually; but it is to the effect that the conductor, who had promised to recommend the work, made absolute nonsense of it, and the orchestral players burst into laughter. Then the conductor said to them: "Gentlemen, I did not intend to play the work right through, but I wanted to have a sight of the man who has presumed to say such things about the master Brahms," referring, of course, to Wolf's articles in the "Salonblatt." "Now," continues Wolf, "how does the moral of this story please you? Ha! ha! very droll, isn't it? Damnably droll! My first impulse after hearing these words was to send . . . a challenge. My friends who were there managed to convince me of the uselessness of such a step and to dissuade me from this design. I am now collecting data for a brochure that will throw such a light on the behaviour of . . . that they will curse the light of the world, envying the night-owl and the bat their existence in the dark. Good-bye, and thank God for the quiet corner of earth into which he has blown you."[1]

[1] Dr. Decsey omits the name of the conductor in question—Dr. Richter. Irritated by some recent remarks of Wolf's friend Karl Grunsky, Dr. Richter addressed an open letter to "Die Musik" on the matter, giving his own

Whether Wolf was right or wrong in his belief that personal malevolence was at the bottom of the bad display of the orchestra, it must be admitted that the orchestration of the *Penthesilea* of those days was necessarily inexpert. Some six years afterwards the work was tried over by Kähler, an admirer of Wolf's, with the idea of a performance in Mannheim; but Kähler himself declared that the scoring of the work stood in the way of the hearer's appreciation of its ideas. In the form in which we now have the *Penthesilea* the orchestration has been touched-up by Hellmesberger.

The only surviving compositions that can be atrributed to this year (1886) are the two songs *Der König bei der Krönung* (words by Mörike) and *Biterolf im Lager von Akkon* (words by Scheffel). A setting of Platen's *Christnacht* for soli, chorus, and orchestra was begun at Christmas, but not finished for some two or three years. In 1887 his compositions were not very numerous, but they indicate his growing powers, and were a preparation for the tremendous outbreak of energy in the Mörike songs of the following year. To January 1887 belong the *Wächterlied auf der Wartburg* (words by Scheffel), and the *Wanderers Nachtlied* of Goethe; in March came the *Beherzigung* of Goethe and two settings of poems by Eichendorff—*Der Soldat* and *Die Zigeunerin*. Two other lyrics by the same poet—*Das Waldmädchen* and *Der Nachtzauber*—were set in April and May respectively. This seems to have been all the creative work his critical occupation allowed him to produce during the year, except a *Humoristisches Intermezzo* and an *Italienische Serenade*,

version of what happened at the rehearsal. This in turn drew a rejoinder from Karl Grunsky. One can only regret the controversy; it would have been much better to have let the episode be forgotten.

both for string quartet. The latter must not be confused with the *Italienische Serenade* for small orchestra that has been published and frequently performed during the last few years; the orchestral work, written in the early nineties, is, however, founded on the thematic material of the earlier quartet.

The death of his father, which occurred in Windischgraz on the 9th May 1887, was a heavy blow to him.[1] For a time he was inconsolable; what was it to him now, he cried, if his songs were published, since no success now could bring him any cause for rejoicing? No longer could he hope to prove to his father that he had been justified in disregarding his advice and insisting on being a musician.

Hugo spent part of the summer with Strasser in Leibniz, near Graz, returning to Vienna in the autumn and taking up his abode in the house of Dr. Edmund Lang. He had had an injury to his foot that required attention, and the Langs fitted up a bed for him on a divan in the study. To his hosts he entered one day with the news that he had been discussing the scarcity of sensible publishers with Friedrich Eckstein, whereupon the latter had undertaken to find one for him. This Eckstein was a man of apparently remarkable parts[2] who had placed his piano and his library at Wolf's disposal, and had been of some service to him in his intellectual life. He had been a private pupil of Bruckner, whose

[1] Wolf's mother survived him. She died on the 25th October 1903, having seen his fame securely established, but having also had the pain of witnessing the tragedy of his last years.

[2] He seems to have been a strange blend of the practical and the visionary. He could carry on a chemical manufactory with "the coolness of an American," as Dr. Decsey puts it, yet make the pilgrimage to Bayreuth a very real pilgrimage by going in sandals like Tannhäuser.

music he did all he could to further; and no doubt Wolf's own ardent admiration of Bruckner was a strong tie between them. Partly through Eckstein's generosity, and partly through that of other friends, who undertook to subscribe for a number of copies, arrangements were made with the Vienna firm of E. Wetzler (Julius Engelmann) for the publication of some of Wolf's songs; these appeared in the winter of 1887–8[1] in two sets of six each, the first dedicated to the composer's mother, the second to the memory of his father. The first volume (*Sechs Lieder für eine Frauenstimme*), contained the *Morgentau*, *Die Spinnerin*, *Das Vöglein*, *Mausfällenspruchlein*, *Wiegenlied im Sommer* and *Wiegenlied im Winter*; the second (*Sechs Gedichte von Scheffel, Mörike, Goethe und Kerner*) contained *Zur Ruh, zur Ruh! Der König bei der Krönung*, *Biterolf*, *Wächterlied auf der Wartburg*, *Wanderers Nachtlied*, and *Beherzigung*. The earliest of the songs (*Morgentau*) dated from June 1877; the latest (*Beherzigung*) from March 1887.

It was the first time that anything of Wolf's had attained the dignity of print; and, curious as it may seem, there is no doubt that the publication of these mostly youthful songs was the turning-point in Wolf's career. It drew all his activities into one channel, and gave us in time the Wolf we now know as the greatest master of the modern song. As Dr. Decsey has pointed out, had Wolf died in 1886 he would have left a heap of miscellaneous work, but little that could be said to be characteristically and unmistakably Wolfian. He had shown undoubted ability as a song writer, as an instrumental writer, as a choral writer, and as a critic; but nothing of all this work, with the exception of the D minor quartet, would have sufficed

[1] Dr. Decsey gives the date in one place as 1887, in another as 1888.

to make his name immortal. It was the publication of these two small collections of songs that gave him full consciousness of where his real destiny lay. Three years later, in a letter to Oscar Grohe, he said that everything he had done before he came to this consciousness was nothing more than a long and painful attempt at suicide. He now determined to devote himself mainly to song-writing, and that on a new plan, setting to music not a poem here and there by one poet or another, but a whole collection of poems by one man.

Having cut himself loose from the "Salonblatt," he went to live in Perchtoldsdorf, a small village near Vienna, where the house of his friend Heinrich Werner was at his disposal for the winter. Here he settled in February 1888. Then the wonderful Mörike songs poured from him like a flood that had long been dammed. He wrote the first of the set, *Der Tambour*, on the 16th February. By November fifty-three of them had been written, the number of days actually devoted to their composition being apparently only forty-two. On the 22nd February he wrote three—*Der Knabe und das Immlein*, the *Jägerlied*, and *Ein Stündlein wohl vor Tag*; on nine other occasions two songs were turned out in the same day.[1] His jubilant letters to his friends reveal his own sheer astonishment at this sudden outburst of productiveness. "Just now," he writes to Lang on the 22nd February, "I have written a new song" (*Der Knabe und das Immlein*). "A heavenly song, I tell you! *quite* heavenly! marvellous! By God! it will soon be over with me, for my facility increases from day to day. How far shall I yet go? I dread thinking of it. I have no inclination to write an opera, for I

[1] The date of composition of each song is given in the Appendix to the present volume.

tremble to think of the number of ideas it would mean. Ideas, dear friend, are terrible. I feel it. My cheeks glow with excitement like molten iron, and this state of inspiration is to me not a pure joy but a ravishing torture. To-day I have put together in imagination a whole comic opera at the piano. I believe I could do something really good in this line. But I shrink from the hardships of it; I am too cowardly for a methodical composer. What does the future hold in store for me? This question torments and alarms me and occupies my thoughts in sleeping and waking. Am I one that is called? am I in the long-run indeed one of the chosen? God forbid! That would be a fine business for me!"

On the same day he writes to his friend Werner: "The days of Lodi truly seem to be coming again. My Lodi as regards the song was the year 1878; at that time I wrote almost every day *one* good song, and sometimes *two*. Now open your nostrils wide. Scarcely was my letter sent off when, taking the Mörike in hand, I wrote a second song." (The *Jägerlied*.) "Now congratulate me or damn me, just as you please. Should Polyhymnia be unkind enough to threaten me with a third song, I will bring the terrible news in person early in the morning." Then, later on, "Despise me! The villainy is done. The third song, *Ein Stündlein wohl vor Tag*, has been written, and how! This is an eventful day!"

On the 24th he writes again to Werner: "It is now just 7 o'clock in the evening, and I am as superlatively happy as a superlatively happy king. Again I have sung a new song." (*Nimmersatte Liebe*.) "When you hear it, my jewel, the devil hold you with delight! The end is in real student-style. It goes as merrily as could be wished."

The next day there is a new outcry over two fresh songs, one of which is so awful and strange that he is quite afraid of it. "God help the poor souls who will one day hear it." In March the letters are in the same almost breathless strain. On the 20th he writes that he has composed his masterpiece, — *Erstes Liebeslied eines Mädchens*; "it is much the best I have yet done. In comparison with this song all the earlier ones are only child's-play. The music is so strikingly characteristic, and at the same time so intense, that it would lacerate the nervous system of a block of marble." The next day there is a *crescendo* even on this: "I revoke the opinion that the *Erstes Liebeslied eines Mädchens* is my best, for the one I wrote this morning—the *Fussreise*—is a million times better. When you have heard this last song you can have only one wish in your soul—to die. Meanwhile live, and live well. Your extra-happy W." In only one case does he seem to have given more than a single day to the composition of a song; this was the exquisite *Auf einer Wanderung*, one of the most wonderful of all Wolf's lyrics. He began it on the 11th March, left it unfinished then, and for another fortnight could not dream himself back into the precise mood for completing the song in the spirit in which it had been begun. At last the long-delayed illumination came, and he completed the song by inserting the lovely middle section, which contrasts so finely with what comes before and after. All this time he was deliriously happy,—lived with the utmost frugality, worked at his songs all day, made music with a few chosen friends at night, and almost dismissed from his mind the crude external world in which he had so long struggled for a place.

It will be seen from the list in the Appendix that between

the composition of the first forty-three of the Mörike songs and that of the last ten there comes a gap of nearly five months. Wolf wrote in a fury of inspiration from February to May; then he put the volume aside until October, when, with the exception of the second *Auf eine Christblume*, which was written on 26th November, he finished his task in one week in October. This, as we shall see later, was his usual manner of working — a period of incandescent inspiration, during which his brain functioned furiously like a volcano, then a period of almost complete quiescence, during which his imagination, though it must have been working unknown to him beneath the surface, as the silent forces of the earth work in it during the seeming death of the winter days, brought forth neither flowers nor fruit, his apparent sterility, indeed, sometimes causing him acute mental anguish. The cessation of work in the summer of 1888, however, was a deliberate one, Wolf probably feeling the strain of the intense cerebration of the previous months. He visited his brother-in-law Strasser at Bruck-on-the-Mur and went tramping with him through Upper Styria and Carinthia. Near Glindorf Wolf had a curious experience. Going through the old castle of Hoch-Osterwitz, on the 4th June, he heard strange sounds as if someone were playing a piano in the distance. He walked on, and found that the sounds came from an Æolian harp that was hung at one of the windows. He listened in the deepest absorption, then returned to Strasser and said, "That is indeed wonderful. See, I have never in my life heard an Æolian harp until this moment, and yet I divined exactly how it sounds and have so expressed it in my song. It is remarkable." Then he sat down and wrote out for Strasser some bars from his exquisite setting

of Mörike's *An eine Aeolsharfe*, which he had composed in the previous April.

From Styria he went in August to Bayreuth with Eckstein, Zweybrück and other friends, heard the "Meistersinger" and "Parsifal," and was deeply affected by both works. Zweybrück tells us that after the first Act of "Parsifal," which he himself then heard for the first time, he was so moved that he wandered alone into the grounds, feeling indisposed to chatter with the other people at the hotel. He heard someone else sobbing, and saw Wolf sitting on one of the seats with his head clasped in his hands, and evidently shaken with emotion. Zweybrück withdrew without betraying his own presence.

From Bayreuth Wolf went to Munich, and from there back to Vienna. In the beginning of October he accepted the hospitality of Eckstein at Unterach on the Attersee, in the Salzkammergut. In these romantic surroundings he resumed composition, but did not immediately take up the interrupted Mörike volume. We shall see later on that one of the strangest characteristics of Wolf's song-writing is the different style he unconsciously adopts with each poet he sets to music. Each of the Mörike songs has indeed a physiognomy of its own, just as each German has a physiognomy of his own, but it is a physiognomy as different from that of any of the Spanish songs, for instance, as a German's is from a Spaniard's. You could not, as has frequently been pointed out, take a song from one of his volumes—say the Mörike—and put it in one of the others—say the Italian or the Spanish. With every new poet there came to Wolf a new style, a new idiom, a new way of feeling emotion, so completely did he sink himself in his poet and saturate himself in the poet's peculiar atmosphere. It is therefore all the more

astonishing that before setting to work again on the Mörike songs he should have composed a number of songs to words by Eichendorff, in a style that never once sets us thinking of the Mörike music, and then have turned to the Mörike volume and completed it in the same spirit as that of the songs already written for it, as if his nature were a dual one and he could evoke or put into quiescence either side of it at will.

He had already made some Eichendorff settings—*Erwartung* and *Die Nacht* in 1880, *Der Soldat* (II) in 1886, *Der Soldat* (I), *Die Zigeunerin*, *Das Waldmädchen* and *Nachtzauber* in 1887. In August and September 1888, before he went to Unterach, he added to these *Verschwiegene Liebe*, *Der Schreckenberger*, and *Der Glücksritter*; then in nine days, in the Unterach villa, he composed ten more songs,—*Seemanns Abschied* on the 21st September, *Der Scholar* and *Der Musikant* on the 22nd, *Der verzweifelte Liebhaber* on the 23rd, *Unfall* on the 25th, *Der Freund* on the 26th, *Liebesglück* on the 27th, *Ständchen* on the 28th, and *Heimweh* and *Lieber alles* on the 29th,—plainly pouring the music out in such another fury of possession as during the composition of the Mörike songs in the previous spring. Yet after this he once more takes up the other poet and thinks himself back into the old atmosphere with the most consummate ease, resuming in October the Mörike idiom he had dropped five months before, and putting the Eichendorff style as completely out of sight as if that interlude had never been. And when he came to finish the Mörike set it was with the old eager joy and consuming ardour. With the exception of the final song, the second *Auf eine Christblume*, which was added on the 26th November, the last ten were written within seven days, *An den Schlaf* and *Neue Liebe* being

composed on the 4th October, *Zum neuen Jahr* on the 5th, *Schlafendes Jesuskind* and *Wo find ich Trost* on the 6th, *Charwoche* on the 8th, *Gesang Weylas* on the 9th, and *An die Geliebte* and the magnificent *Feuerreiter* on the 10th.

During the composition of all these songs of 1888 he sought incessantly the opinion of his Vienna friends, Josef Schalk, Ferdinand Löwe, and Richard Hirsch, not of course as a guide or a corrective,—for no man ever saw his own work so objectively as Wolf when once it was set down on paper,—but for the pleasure it gave him to know himself thoroughly understood by men of discrimination. One evening, apparently, he became suspicious of the genuineness of their approval, and tested it in a way characteristic of him. Having promised to perform some of his own songs, he sat down at the piano and played a number of Schumann's, insisting at length on their excellences, until his auditors became impatient. At last he promised them his own songs after he had given them just one more Schumann, which happened to be unknown to any of them. They declared they did not like it. He went through it twice more, urging its beauties upon them, but in vain. When finally they begin to deride it he burst into laughter, told them he agreed with them that it was a dry piece of work, and then, having tried their judgment in this way, went on with the performance of his own songs.

Even before the Mörike volume was completed on the 26th November with the belated *Auf eine Christblume* (II), Wolf had thrown himself with characteristic abandonment into the composition of a set of Goethe songs. He began with the *Wer sich der Einsamkeit ergibt*, from "Wilhelm Meister," on the 27th October. Between that date and

the end of November he added another twelve. Then he went to Döbling, near Vienna, to be the guest of his friend Köchert. There, left completely to himself, he entered upon another period of unceasing inspiration. Beginning on the 9th December with *Ritter Kurt's Brautfahrt*, he wrote in that month twelve songs in all, in January 1889 another twenty-one, four more in February, and added the final *Die Spröde* in October. Putting this last aside, the other fifty songs—some of them of considerable length—had been written between 27th October and the 12th February, a period of one hundred and eight days. On several occasions two songs were composed in one day. Further, wherever a number of lyrics were found in the same book of Goethe or the same collection of poems, he wrote the music to all of them in the same breath. Thus the first five songs, composed between the 27th October and 2nd November, were all drawn from "Wilhelm Meister," the three songs of the old harper being set in four days. Between the 14th and the 22nd December, five other poems from "Wilhelm Meister" were set to music. In January he absorbed himself in the collection of poems entitled by Goethe the "West-östlicher Divan." From the "Schenkenbuch" in this collection he set on the 16th January *Was in der Schenke waren heute* and *So lang man nüchtern ist*; on the 17th, *Ob der Koran von Ewigkeit sei*; on the 18th, *Sie haben wegen der Trunkenheit* and *Trunken müssen wir alle sein.* From the "Buch des Sängers" he set on the 19th *Phänomen* and on the 21st *Erschaffen und Beleben.* Then he took in hand the "Buch der Suleika," setting on the 21st *Nicht Gelegenheit macht Diebe*; on the 23rd, *Hochbeglückt in deiner Liebe* and *Wie sollt' ich heiter bleiben*; on the 24th, *Als ich auf dem Euphrat schiffte* and its pendant *Dies zu deuten bin*

erbötig; on the 25th, *Wenn ich dein gedenke* and *Komm Liebchen komm*; on the 26th, *Hätt' ich irgend wohl Bedenken*; on the 29th, *Locken haltet mich gefangen*; and on the 30th, *Nimmer will ich dich verlieren.*

After the completion of the Goethe volume, in February 1899, he once more took a long rest. In July he was again at Bayreuth, listening to "Parsifal," "Tristan," and "Die Meistersinger." One day, at a gathering at the piano-rooms of Steingräber, Eckstein, Heinrich Porges and others being present, the great Belgian baritone Blauwaert sang a number of the Mörike songs and the *Epiphanias* from the Goethe volume at sight, Wolf acting as accompanist.

The Mörike volume was published in the spring of 1889, the Eichendorff in the autumn of the same year, and the Goethe in the early part of 1890. The first was published by Wetzler, the second and third by Lacom,—both music-publishers in a small way of business in Vienna. The costs were defrayed, as in the case of the two earlier collections, by the subscriptions of a number of friends; but Wolf was under the impression that the expense had been entirely borne by Gustav Schur.[1]

After his summer's rest he began work, in the autumn of 1889, on a new set of songs,—those of the *Spanisches Liederbuch* of Heyse and Geibel. To these, as well as the *Italienisches Liederbuch* of Heyse, he seems to have been introduced some time before by Dr. Zweybrück. Eckstein had taken Wolf up to Zweybrück in the Café Griensteidl and asked the doctor if he knew of any good poetry for

[1] A large proportion of the cost was borne by a Mrs. Elizabeth Fairchild, of Boston, U.S.A., who had met Wolf in Bayreuth, and was so taken with the songs she heard there that she ordered two hundred volumes, which she distributed among her American friends.

his friend to set to music. The next day Zweybrück brought Wolf his own copy of the *Spanisches Liederbuch*, which Wolf retained for several months.[1] He threw himself into the composition of these songs with his usual consuming ardour. A good deal of his time was wasted by having to go into Vienna twice a week to make music with a Countess Harrach; but on the days that were his own he wrote with his usual endless facility from morning to night, forgetting food, exercise, friends, and everything but his poems. He began with *Wer sein holdes Lieb verloren* on the 28th October, at Perchtoldsdorf. Between that date and the 26th November he had written nineteen songs. Then came a rest of rather more than a fortnight, broken only by the composition of *Wer tat deinem Füsslein weh?* on the 5th December. Starting in earnest again on the 12th, he wrote six more songs by the 21st of the month. In January he composed only two, none at all in February, five in March, and the final eleven in April 1890.[2]

[1] Dr. Zweybrück also states that he recommended Mörike to Wolf and lent him a copy of the poems. But this is apparently a mistake, as Wolf had been familiar with Mörike's works for some years.

[2] I follow the chronological list, that is founded on Wolf's own note at the end of each song. Dr. Decsey, too, speaks of the forty-four songs being composed between the 28th October 1889 and 27th April 1890, "with a six-weeks' interruption, from 15th January to 28th March." But it is difficult to reconcile this with a statement in Wolf's letter to Strasser of the 23rd March, in which he says that in spite of the many interruptions caused by his having to go into Vienna for the Countess Harrach he has written since the *22nd February* twenty-five songs. It will be observed that in the chronological list there is nothing at all between the 15th January and 28th March. The dates on the songs are presumably those on which Wolf *completed* them; but even after taking this into consideration it is hard to believe either (1) that Wolf would say he had written twenty-five songs between the 22nd February and the 23rd March if he had not really done so; or (2) that all these songs should have been merely sketched out and finished later, but attributed to the day of their completion. As a matter of fact, twenty-eight

In 1889 the old Poet Gottfried Keller celebrated his seventieth birthday. Wolf meant to produce a volume of settings of Keller's poems at that time, but the songs were not actually composed until 1890. These are the six *Alte Weisen* now published in the volume of *Lieder nach verschiedenen Dichtern*. They were all written at Unterach between the 25th May and 16th June, an inflamed throat accounting for Wolf's unusual slowness in the composition of them. He had meant to dedicate the songs to the poet, but this plan was frustrated by the death of Keller.

of the forty-four songs were written by the 15th January, leaving only sixteen to complete the volume. How then could he have written *twenty-five* between the 22nd February and the 23rd March? I confess that I can throw no light on the mystery.

CHAPTER V

SLOWLY GROWING FAME

IT is hardly to be wondered at that Wolf's fame grew very slowly in Vienna, in spite of the fact that nearly a hundred and forty of his songs were now published. The work was too original to attract either the ordinary singer or the ordinary amateur; and Wolf had made so many enemies for himself by his criticisms that he could hardly expect the official cliques to go out of their way to help him. Now and then a song or two of his would appear on some programme or other. Paula von Goldschmidt, for example, the wife of the composer Adalbert von Goldschmidt, an old friend of Wolf's, had given the *Mausfällenspruchlein* at a private musical evening some years before the date at which we have now arrived; and in March 1888, Rosa Papier had introduced the *Morgentau* and *Zur Ruh, zur Ruh* at one of her song-recitals. But it was through the instrumentality of the Vienna Wagner-Verein that Wolf's reputation first began to spread. In November 1888 Fräulein Ellen Forster sang *Der Knabe und das Immlein*, *Zitronenfalter in April*, and *Er ist's* at one of the musical evenings of the Society. A month later Josef Schalk arranged a concert at which Ferdinand Jäger sang nine of the Mörike, Eichendorff, and Goethe songs, Wolf himself accompanying at the piano. From

that time onward Schalk and Jäger laboured with incessant devotion in his cause, Jäger singing the songs not only at his own concerts but at the recitals of instrumentalists and at the "evenings" of various Societies. It is pleasant to read that after a number of the Goethe songs had been given before the Vienna Goethe-Verein in March 1890, the members of the Society sent Wolf a letter of thanks for the new illumination his music had given to the poems. Jäger further interested Hans von Wolzogen, the well-known Wagnerian, at that time editor of the "Bayreuther Blätter," in Wolf's work. He sang a number of the songs to Friedrich Hofmann, a high official of the Graz Wagner-Verein, who was so taken with them that he instantly bought everything that was then published of Wolf's, and arranged for a recital by Jäger before the members of the Society on the 12th April 1890. Dr. Heinrich Potpeschnigg, who later became one of Wolf's best friends, was the accompanist. The success was enormous, many of the songs having to be repeated three times.

Schalk not only interested the Vienna Wagner-Verein in Wolf, but managed to get the composer to conquer his dislike for publicity and attend some of the meetings of the Verein, where he would occasionally play and sing his new songs. But it was not long before a strong party was formed in the Verein against Wolf and Schalk. Many of the members no doubt thought that too much fuss was being made of a young and unknown man; the concert of the 11th December 1888, of which mention has already been made, scandalised them because it was devoted entirely to Beethoven and Hugo Wolf,—a juxtaposition of names which a few solemn noodles were unable to stand. Others perhaps felt that a Wagner-Verein, in

giving up so much of its energies to the propaganda of Wolf's work, was rather losing sight of its original mission. Wolf himself was deeply hurt at the opposition to him. He wrote to Schalk, expressing his resolve to have nothing more to do with the public; henceforth he will belong more than ever to no one but himself. He will, he says, avoid the Wagner-Verein, because an artist like himself, impulsive by nature, is not at home with people who act by rule of reason and logic and do not understand the artist. He will make no attempt to capture the public, which means nothing more than the infamous mob. "I will be just a private person. Oh, if I were only a cobbler like the incomparable Hans Sachs! How happy, how cheerful would my life be! Cobbling on work-days and composing on Sundays in my holiday clothes, simply as a hobby, just for myself and a friend or two,—say you, Löwe and Hirsch. Yes! that would be an existence. You see, dear friend, it is a case of being a philosopher. I am not enough of one to disregard the envy and the machinations of my enemies, but just enough of one to live for myself alone and ignore publicity entirely. Had I not wanted to give public expression to my gratitude to you and Franciscus [*i.e.* Franz Schalk] . . . no power would have got me to publish the Eichendorff songs. Therewith is an end to it once for all. I really do not see why I should worry about the Wagner-Verein, since the sole ground for enduring vexations and persecutions turns out to be insufficient—I mean material profit. . . . Is it not much better and finer to be loved and understood by a few men than to be heard and reviled by thousands?

"The devil of vanity and ambition will not again lay hold of me by the forelock, you may depend on that.

I am not a deranged Mahomet, to spread my things by fire and sword, and not a hair of the head of any of my friends shall be hurt on my account." He accordingly refuses to have anything more to do with the Wagner-Verein.

Both he and his friends now found it exceedingly difficult to make any headway. One result of our English backwardness in music is that we do not yet know enough about it or take it seriously enough to form ourselves into musical cliques. An English town impartially welcomes or impartially ignores all schools. In cities like Vienna, where there have been many generations of musical life and constant opera and concert-giving, and where many great composers have had their residence, music is almost as much an affair of parties as politics with us. Your good Brahmsian shudders when he thinks of the evil that Wagner and Strauss have done to music; your good Wagnerian turns up his royal nose at the far-fetched classicism of Brahms. In the Vienna of the eighties and nineties most men felt that they had to belong to one camp or the other; he who swore by Brahms was a traitor to the holy cause if he did not despise Bruckner and everything else that had come from the school of Wagner. And as Wolf had not only avowed himself a greater admirer of Bruckner than of Brahms, and not only shown in his own music a decided affinity to the Wagnerian spirit, but had made innumerable personal enemies among the musicians of the city, especially among the partisans of Brahms, it is not surprising that when he in turn came before the public as a composer his foes should have seized the glorious opportunity this gave them to pay him back in his own coin. On the 5th March 1889 Jäger gave a concert of Wolf's songs. Thereupon one

typical journalist came out with the acid remark that Wolf, having once made himself notorious by writing bad criticism, was now trying to become a composer,—his compositions, however, only suggesting that he would do better to go back to criticism. A few days later Max Kalbeck took up the same strain. Kalbeck has for some twenty years or more been one of the leading musical critics of Vienna; but he is best known in England, perhaps, as the author of what is to be the standard "Life of Brahms," of which the first volume appeared in 1904. He is a man of decided ability within the limitations of his temperament, but too blind a Brahmsian to be able to take a broad view of any music of a totally different cast from that of his idol. In the article in question he began with a few sneers at Wagner, the Wagner-Verein, and Bruckner, complimented Jäger on singing some songs of Schubert and Marschner,[1] and then let loose his gall on the Wolf songs with which the programme had ended—"dry, puerile stuff, extravagantly banal melodies and ridiculous harmonic convulsions, that would fain pass themselves off as emotions of the soul! Herr Hugo Wolf, who accompanied at the piano and spared neither the instrument nor the singer, at one time was a reporter, in which capacity he caused in musical circles a gaiety he did not intend by means of some singular specimens of his style and taste. The advice was given him to take to composition instead. The latest productions of his muse have demonstrated that this well-meant advice was bad. He should turn critic again."

[1] Kalbeck was ignorant of the fact that it was Wolf who had discovered these songs of Marschner and interested Jäger in them. Had he known this he would probably not have been so enthusiastic over them.

Into such petulant foolishness can a retrogressive critic's bad temper betray him,—foolishness that happily remains in print as a perpetual reproach to him and a warning to others. When one learns that the songs given by Jäger that evening included such now-recognised masterpieces as *Anakreons Grab*, *Der Rattenfänger*, *Frühling übers Jahr*, *Komm Liebchen komm*, and *Trunken müssen wir alle sein*, and thinks of what the critic said of them and their composer, one is on the whole much less sorry for Hugo Wolf than for Max Kalbeck.

Still a few intelligent and appreciative articles on the songs appeared now and then in the journals,—by Max Graf, Robert Hirschfeld, Max Vancsa and others; and the songs themselves made a few valuable friends for Wolf here and there. Among these was Emil Kauffmann, the "Universitätsmusik-Direktor" in Tübingen, who had been struck in 1890 by an article of Josef Schalk on Wolf's first songs, procured them for himself, and straightway opened up a correspondence with the composer. Not the least valuable of the services he rendered to Wolf were the intelligent articles he wrote upon his songs from time to time,—though the first article rather ruffled Wolf because Kauffmann had spoken of him in connection not only with Wagner but with Brahms.[1]

Wolf's letters to him, extending from 1890 to 1898, have been published in volume form, and are of exceptional interest; Wolf felt that he was more than ordinarily understood by Kauffmann, and discussed with him his own affairs and the music of other people with unusual frankness. Some of his Vienna friends, about this time, made a determined effort to extend the circle of Wolf's

[1] In his letter to Kauffmann of the 21st May 1890 he gives his reasons for not being pleased with the association.

acquaintances, and to interest influential people in his music. The worst they had to contend against was the composer's own touchy disposition. He hated society in general and society ladies in particular, and grudged owing anything to them; and more than once his malicious, sarcastic humour must have estranged some good lady who may possibly not have been blessed with too much intelligence, judged by Wolf's exacting standard, but still was genuinely kind and well-disposed towards him. Such outbursts of satirical impishness as singing to these ladies, with a sly air, the songs of his in which the sex is bantered or derided,—like *Das Köhlerweib ist trunken*, or *Herz verzage nicht geschwind, weil die Weiber Weiber sind*,—would not be likely to advance his cause very much.

A fund was also started by his generous admirers to be devoted to the spreading of his works, by paying for the cost of their publication, defraying the losses on recitals, and so on. He himself would accept nothing from his friends but their hospitality. One house or another was generally open to him, in particular that of Köchert. Wolf lived with Spartan simplicity, and his needs both of dress and food were very few; but to a man of his pride his constant dependence upon other people must have been a sore trouble. Their assistance in bringing out his works he could of course accept without shame. About the beginning of 1890 it was resolved to find some more cosmopolitan publisher than the two local firms who had issued the earlier songs. After negotiations with various musical publishers, satisfactory arrangements were come to with the house of Schott, in Mainz. The way for Wolf was smoothed by Humperdinck, the composer of "Hänsel and Gretel," who

happened at that time to be the reader for Schott. He knew nothing whatever of Wolf until, in April 1890, a bundle of songs was handed to him for his critical opinion. These so fascinated him that he read them through till far into the night. His warm recommendation of them decided Dr. Strecker, the head of the firm, in their favour. After various negotiations it was agreed that Schotts were to bring out the volumes at their own expense, while the property in them was to remain vested in Wolf, who was to receive half the final net profits. There were one or two minor difficulties in the way at first. The house of Wetzler had gone into bankruptcy, and a firm of Leipzig engravers held a lien upon the plates of their edition of the songs. This trouble being at length surmounted, Wolf had a few tussles of his own with his new publishers. He insisted on the various collections of songs coming out in volume form, refused to have them issued in any but the original keys, and was most fastidious as to the general get-up of the volumes. The slowness with which the engraving went on drew from him many impatient protests. The Keller songs appeared first, at the beginning of 1891, then the Spanish, followed in 1892 by the Mörike, Goethe, and Eichendorff volumes. After the issue of the Keller songs he was enraged by a request from Schotts for the usual photographs and biographical information with which publishers naturally try to work up the public interest in their wares. Wolf refused point-blank to have anything to do with this kind of *réclame*; the songs, he said, must make their way by their own merit or not at all.

It was during his negotiations with Schotts (in 1890) that Wolf began to correspond with the valuable new

friends Emil Kauffmann and Oscar Grohe, the latter of whom, like the former, had been attracted to him in the first place by his songs. Kauffmann's father—who himself had been an amateur composer—had been a friend of Mörike's, a fact in itself sufficient to attract Wolf to the son. For his thirtieth birthday (13th March 1890) Kauffmann sent him an autograph poem of Mörike, a gift that greatly pleased him, although he did not think the poem suitable for music. In May he writes that he has set Reinick's *Dem Vaterland*[1] for chorus and orchestra, and asks Kauffmann to try to get this performed by the Stuttgart Gesangverein. On the 5th June he sent him the score for this purpose. In September he was in Unterach, where on the 25th he began work upon his new collection of songs—the *Italienisches Liederbuch*—composing between that date and the 4th October the *Mir ward gesagt du reisest in die Ferne*, *Ihr seid die Allerschönste*, *Gesegnet sei durch den die Welt entstund*, and *Selig ihr blinden*. On the 12th October he went to Munich, where he made the acquaintance of M. G. Conrad, who had known Mörike personally and was able to give Wolf many interesting details about his favourite. Conrad took him to some of the musical notabilities of the town, such as Heinrich Porges the critic and music-director, Eugen Gura, the great interpreter of Loewe and Wagner, and the poet Detlev von Liliencron,—to whom Wolf sang and played many of his songs. He had hoped to arrange a concert in Munich, but nothing came of the idea.

On the 14th accordingly he went to Tübingen, where he called unexpectedly on Kauffmann, whose personal

[1] It had originally been written as a solo for Ferdinand Jäger, but Wolf had realised that the poem demanded a larger medium of utterance than a single voice.

acquaintance he had not hitherto made. They had merely exchanged a few letters, which on Wolf's side had been a little cautious and reserved; he had taken it into his head that Kauffmann must certainly be a Brahmsian. He was cordially welcomed, stayed two days in Kauffmann's house, and came to know him better,—his host being, indeed, one of the most progressive of German musicians. Wolf began a discussion upon Brahms,—on his favourite text that there was "no note of exultation" in his music,—and he played selections from "Lohengrin" to show what he felt was lacking in Brahms; but the tactful host avoided an argument that could have only had bitter results. He drew Wolf closer to him by talking about Mörike instead. At night Wolf played "Tristan" to a number of Kauffmann's friends in his usual expressive way, and the next morning he sang for his host and Professor Schmid[1] some of the unprinted Spanish and Keller songs, and gave an astonishing performance on the piano of the scherzo from Bruckner's fourth symphony. In the afternoon the three took a walk,—Wolf speaking, among other matters, of the longing that had latterly come upon him for a good operatic libretto,—and at six o'clock he set off for Stuttgart. From there he went to Heidelberg and then on to Mannheim, whence, on the 18th, he wrote Kauffmann a letter of warm thanks for the happy time he had spent in his house; later on, when he sent his host his photograph, he gracefully inscribed on it the opening bars of his lovely Mörike song *Auf einer Wanderung*, in which the poet speaks of his visit to a "friendly town."

In Mannheim he called on Oscar Grohe, with whom,

[1] Kauffmann's son-in-law, and Professor of Classical Philosophy at the University of Tübingen.

as with Kauffmann, he had corresponded without having yet met him. Grohe compelled him to leave his hotel and put up at his house, and introduced Wolf to Weingartner, who was at that time Kapellmeister at Mannheim. Wolf overwhelmed Weingartner with a performance of several of his songs, but does not seem for his part to have been equally struck by Weingartner's "Genesius," which the composer played through to a select circle of friends.

On the 22nd he went to Mainz, where he met Dr. Strecker, the head of the firm of Schott, to whom and to Humperdinck—who came over from Frankfort to make Wolf's personal acquaintance—he played some of his music. He discussed business matters with Strecker, and came away on the 24th quite pleased with his publisher and with himself. He also made the acquaintance of the composer Fritz Volbach, who, besides doing all he could to spread the appreciation of Wolf's songs by writing magazine articles upon them and by interesting his friends in them, gave the composer some useful letters of recommendation when he visited Berlin in February 1892. Strecker also introduced him to Max Friedlaender, the well-known editor of Schubert's songs, whom Wolf hurt slightly by criticising Schubert's settings of the harper's ballad in "Wilhelm Meister." From Mainz he went to Cologne, armed with letters of introduction from Humperdinck to Dr. Hermann Wette[1] and to Franz Wüllner, the well-known head of the Conservatoire and the conductor of the Gürzenach concerts. He also met Dr. Otto Neitzel, the brilliant lecturer, pianist, composer and critic, and the composer Arnold Mendelssohn. As in other towns, he

[1] Wette was Humperdinck's brother-in-law. It was Frau Wette who wrote the libretto of "Hänsel and Gretel." The friendship between Wette and Wolf came to an abrupt conclusion some years later.

played and sang to his new friends a vast number of his songs, creating the usual enthusiasm.

After four days' stay in Cologne, Wolf reached Frankfort on the 27th October, where he was Humperdinck's guest for two days. He made his usual propaganda on behalf of Bruckner, succeeding in interesting Humperdinck in the Vienna composer by playing the third symphony with him as a piano duet. Humperdinck in his turn recommended Wolf's songs to Stockhausen; it is comical to note Hugo's naïve wonder that the great singer should really take to *his* songs,—for was not Stockhausen one of the most notorious of Brahmsians?

On the 28th he was back in Vienna, delighted with the success of his little tour and the new friends he had made. He settled in Döbling, and almost immediately began work again on his *Italienisches Liederbuch*. On the 13th November he wrote the *Wer rief dich denn* and *Der Mond hat eine schwere Klag' erhoben*, and on the 14th *Nun lass uns Frieden schliessen*. These, with the four written in September and October, made seven of the first set of the Italian songs; the remaining fifteen, however, were not composed for another year. The immediate reason of the interruption was a commission from the director of the Burgtheater, Max Burckhardt, to write some incidental music for the coming performance of Ibsen's "Das Fest auf Solhaug"; the commission had come about through the good offices of Wolf's friend Gustav Schur. He seems not to have taken too kindly to the work; perhaps he was put a little out of key with it by the facts that the music had been ordered of him instead of having sprung from an impulse of his own, and that he had to compose it by a given time. His first admiration for Ibsen's play gradually dwindled away, and he found the later stages of the composi-

tion a sore trial. On the 29th November he writes to Kauffmann that he is "working like a madman" at the instrumentation of the music, for the time fixed for the performance is drawing near and he has still a good deal to do at it. By the middle of December he had finished eight numbers—two songs of Gudmund, a march and chorus in the first Act, an Introduction to the second Act with a chorus, a chorus for the eighth scene of the same Act, an Introduction to the third Act, a chorus for the first scene, and a final chorus. From a letter to Kauffmann of the 14th December it appears that the performance was expected to take place in the following January; it was, however, postponed. On the 22nd he writes to Kauffmann that he has come to a standstill with the two remaining numbers,—Margit's ballad and the overture,—for which he cannot find the right ideas. The work, he says, "is genuine theatre music, full of life, very clear, and quickly seizable, and certainly will not fail to make its effect on the public. I do not anticipate a good performance, however, because of the inadequacy of the orchestral forces—if indeed one can use the word 'forces' in this case. Unfortunately the orchestra at the Burgtheater stands on about the artistic level of the so-called 'Bratlgeiger.' Besides, its summary power only exists, like that of the Russian army, on paper; in reality they are not even the same people, and generally irregular musical troops perform the necessary service. The set-out is in the same category:—two horns, one trumpet, one trombone (oh, holy trinity!) etc. etc. What can a modern composer do with *one* trombone, except blow his own tribulations through it? You will see from this that my relation to the Burgtheater is not at all enviable."

On the 13th March 1891 he speaks of being near the

completion of the music; he is now working at the last number—the overture. The ballad and some *entr'acte* music, he says, have been much applauded by those to whom he has played them; but he ruefully confesses that the music as a whole has taken a form that puts it beyond the powers of the Burgtheater. What he now dreams of is a good concert performance, with a full orchestra and large chorus and plenty of rehearsals; in any other circumstances the work can be heard only in a mutilated form.

The performance took place on the 21st November 1891, but in spite of the zeal and industry of the conductor, Kossel, the music does not seem to have made much effect. The foregoing letters will in part account for this; another prime cause was no doubt the refined style, rather unsuitable for the theatre, in which Wolf had written the work. The actors, moreover, were incapable of rendering the songs properly. After four performances Ibsen's work was withdrawn.[1] Wolf's only consolation was an honorarium of 200 or 300 gulden (about £17–£25)—reports differing as to the exact amount.

Meanwhile he had been trying for some time to arrange for a performance of his *Christnacht*, the hymn by Count von Platen which he had begun to set for soli, chorus, and orchestra on Christmas Eve 1886. He had finished it in May 1889. On the 8th November 1890 he writes to Kauffmann that the work is to be given in Mannheim, in the following January, at a concert including also "Bruckner's eighth symphony and a symphonic work by a certain Richard Strauss. Perhaps I can also smuggle my *Prometheus* (for orchestra) into the programme."

[1] It was given again, with Wolf's music, at the Graz theatre on 21st March 1904.

Grohe had exerted himself to have the work performed, and Weingartner was to conduct it. The performance, however, was postponed to February, the Stuttgart production of *Dem Vaterland* being arranged for about the same time. Again there was a postponement of both works. The *Christnacht* was now put down for the 24th March, and he received a formal invitation from Weingartner to be present at the performance. The work was not actually given until the 9th April, the programme also containing Beethoven's second symphony and Liszt's Faust Symphony. Humperdinck, who was at that time the musical critic of the "Frankfurter Zeitung," went over to Mannheim for the performance. At the rehearsal he met Wolf, who seemed a little out of spirits—not an unusual condition for young composers just before the production of their works, and excusable in the present instance as it was the first large composition of his that Wolf had heard given in public. It was well received both by the audience and the critics, although some of the latter found fault with the writing for the voices, and thought that the whole scheme of the music was too massive for the poetical subject. Humperdinck, in his friendly article in the "Zeitung," also pointed out that the scoring was a little overdone in parts. Wolf himself had to admit that the score needed revision in this respect, though he contended that the orchestra needlessly exaggerated some of the colours. He resolved to recast the work, but never did so.[1]

[1] Wüllner thought of giving the work in Cologne a little while after the Mannheim performance, but wrote Wolf that he could not do so as the choral and orchestral writing was too subtilised for the public there. A projected performance in Vienna also fell through; and Strecker, who had been much taken with the work when Wolf played it to him in Mainz on the 22nd October 1890, now apparently became cautious and declined to publish the

After the Mannheim performance Wolf went to Philippsburg, where he spent about ten days at Grohe's house. From there he went on the 20th April to Frankfort, to be the guest of Humperdinck. He played the Spanish songs to his host, who in return gave Wolf some extracts from "Hänsel and Gretel," upon which he was then at work. It was at Wolf's suggestion that Humperdinck set the whole text to music, instead of parts of it only, as he had at first intended.

On the 21st the pair went to Mainz, where Wolf talked business with Strecker. Then on the 22nd he went on to Carlsruhe, and on the 24th to Stuttgart. Here he saw Förstler, who had intended to produce *Dem Vaterland* on the 25th. The performance, however, fell through, so Wolf proceeded to Tübingen, where he stayed three days at Kauffmann's house. During an excursion to Urach with Kauffmann and Schmid the perennial Brahms question came up for discussion. Wolf grew angry with Schmid for his advocacy—though it was not by any means a thorough-going one—of Brahms, and finally said to him, "If you have any relic of liking left for Brahms, then you are not yet ripe for my music." The wrinkles were soon smoothed out, however, and henceforth the Brahms topic was barred in the Kauffmann circle when Wolf was present.

He left Tübingen on the 27th for Vienna, going by way of Singen, the Lake of Constance, and Bregenz. The splendid scenery both stimulated and saddened him; for the first time, he says in a letter to Kauffmann, Papageno's

score. The orchestration apparently only needed a slight revision by an expert. (It must be remembered that Wolf had had practically no opportunities at that time of hearing his own scoring.) Ferdinand Löwe altered it slightly after Wolf's death, and gave the work with great success in Vienna on 13th December 1903.

words in "The Magic Flute"—"Man lebt nur einmal, das sei dir genug"—struck him as a pessimistic reading of the universe. He was in one of the grey moods to which the highly strung artist is so prone to fall a victim, when all the work one has done or is doing seems so insignificant a grain of dust on the great wheel of the world that one is ashamed to have ever thought it worth preserving. This state of spiritual exhaustion lasted some time with him after his return to Vienna in the early days of May. On the 2nd he writes to Grohe asking him to pray for his poor soul: "I have not the least idea of composing; heaven knows how this will end." A few days afterwards he caught a catarrh; on the doctor's recommendation he went to Unterach, where, however, he recovered very slowly, in spite of his delight in the beauty of the scenery. On the 1st June[1] he writes to Kauffmann that he thinks he has come to the end of his powers. On the 8th it is the same lament. It is not physical illness that distresses him most but the drying-up of his inspiration: "You will understand me when I say that I have not written a note the whole time I have been here,—that I do nothing—simply nothing." In the middle of June he removed to Ebensee, where he was deprived of sleep by the cackling of fowls in the early morning, and by the noise from a stone quarry. At Bayreuth, in July, his nervous malady, assisted by the discomfort of his lodgings, prevented him sleeping at night; in the day the reaction came, and to his great annoyance he fell asleep during the first and third Acts of "Parsifal." He went on to Ebensee and thence to Traunkirchen, and from the latter place wrote a despairing letter on the 13th August to Wette in Frankfort. He is to all intents and

[1] Meanwhile, on the 10th May, Förstler had given the first performance of *Dem Vaterland* in Stuttgart, on the day of the yearly Schiller Festival.

purposes, he says, a dead man. He is living in the loveliest scenery and the best of air, yet he is the most miserable wight on earth. He cannot even read. As for music, "I can no longer form any notion of what a melody or a harmony is, and I am already beginning to doubt whether the compositions bearing my name are really mine." On the 6th he had written in the same strain to Kauffmann in reply to a question as to what he was doing with regard to an opera: "My God! I should be glad if I could write the smallest song, let alone an opera. I firmly believe it is all over with me." On the 12th October his spirit is still no clearer; he writes to Kauffmann in the deepest distress, bewailing his infertility, and fearing he is one of those unhappy men who promise much and perform little; all the musical work he has done for some time is the instrumentation of the *Elfenlied*, a short work for soprano solo, female chorus, and orchestra, which he had begun in 1888.

On the same day he went back to his Döbling quarters. For another four or five weeks his faculties slumbered still; then, towards the end of November, the inspiration burst forth in its usual torrent, and in about three weeks the remaining fifteen songs of the *Italienisches Liederbuch* were written,—one on the 29th November, one on the 2nd December, one on the 3rd, two on the 4th, one on the 5th, one on the 7th, 8th, 9th, 10th, and 11th respectively, two on the 12th, one on the 16th, and one on the 23rd. This made in all twenty-two songs. With the revival of his imaginative power came of course a new joy in life. He writes jubilantly to Kauffmann on the 12th December. The songs, he says, are good; it is again a new world, and when Kauffmann hears them he will wonder at the Proteus-nature that exists inside

Wolf's skin. "I regard the Italian songs as the most original and artistically the most complete of all my works." The flow of ideas again, however, practically ceased for a time. After writing a song almost every day, as we have seen, until the 12th, he could add only two more, on the 16th and 23rd respectively. It was his desire to have thirty-three songs in the first volume of the *Italienisches Liederbuch*; but with the composition of the twenty-second, on December 23rd, the sands closed in on him again, and the second volume was not written till more than four years afterwards.

The *Elfenlied* was just about to be printed, and Kauffmann undertook to give a performance of it in Tübingen. Wolf thanked him warmly but declined, on the ground that the work required a more expert orchestra than Tübingen could furnish.

A project was now set on foot to give a series of Wolf recitals in various towns. It was resolved to begin with Berlin. Strecker, of Schotts, interested himself in the scheme, and negotiations were opened with the Berlin concert agent Hermann Wolff, who obtained from Hugo, not without a few grimaces, the necessary biographical details for the preliminary advertising. The Berlin concert was arranged for the 15th March 1892,[1] the singers to be the ever-faithful Ferdinand Jäger and Fräulein Friederike Mayer, of Salzburg. On the 13th (Wolf's birthday) the *Elfenlied* was to be given at the Gesellschaft concert. It was thought advisable that Wolf should pay a short visit to Berlin some weeks before the concert, in order to make acquaintances and generally ingratiate himself—to spy out the land, as he put it in a letter to Kauffmann of the 30th December. He ac-

[1] The date was afterwards altered to 24th February.

cordingly went to Berlin towards the end of February, taking his mission half seriously, half humorously, and wearing a noticeably new and well-fitting frock-coat; if the songs did not impress the Berliners, he said, the coat certainly would. Armed with letters of introduction from Kauffmann, Grohe's wife, Volbach, and others, he first sought out some of the Austrian colony resident in Berlin, and was particularly befriended by the veteran opera composer Richard Genée. Among old acquaintances whom he met was Weingartner,—who had recently become second conductor at the Berlin opera,—and among the new ones he made were the Baron Franz Lipperheide, —a wealthy amateur, who later on showed the composer many kindnesses,—Siegfried Ochs, the conductor of the Philharmonic chorus, Heinrich Welti, the writer on musical subjects, and his wife Emilie Herzog-Welti, a singer at the Berlin opera. Wolf was in one of his unfortunate moods when he called on Welti, and everything went wrong until Frau Herzog, struck with the beauty of the *Elfenlied*,[1] sang it at first sight without a single error. This drew Wolf out of his cloud, and the three spent a happy evening over the Mörike songs.

Shortly before the date arranged for the recital Jäger fell ill and telegraphed that he could not come to Berlin; then Fräulein Mayer became too hoarse to sing. Wolf was in despair, but there was nothing to do but postpone the concert, which was accordingly fixed for the 5th March. Meanwhile, in order to prepare the way for a better understanding of Wolf's songs, the Berlin Wagner-Verein, through Dr. Richard Sternfeld, arranged a semi-private recital of

[1] Not the choral work that was to be given in Berlin, but the song—the 16th in the Mörike volume.

them by Wolf himself. An afternoon was chosen instead of an evening, so that the hard-worked musical critics might be able to attend. Of the hundred persons invited only a dozen appeared, and among them not a single critic. In the audience, however, was a certain Paul Müller, a teacher at one of the Berlin colleges. The songs made a profound impression on him; he henceforth laboured incessantly with pen and voice in Wolf's behalf, and to him was due the foundation at the end of 1895 of the first Hugo Wolf-Verein, which did so much for the spreading of the composer's fame. Müller has given, in the issue of "Die Musik" for March 1903, his impression of the evening. In the early days of 1892 he had read in a newspaper an announcement that a certain Herr Hugo Wolf from Vienna would shortly give a recital, in the Berlin Sing-Akademie, of songs of his own, composed to poems by Goethe, Eichendorff, Mörike, Keller, and others from the "Spanisches Liederbuch" of Heyse and Geibel. Müller dimly remembered having heard Wolf's name mentioned once, with the casual remark that "his accompaniments were very difficult"; but he knew nothing of the songs. What particularly struck him now was the excellence of the poets whom the composer had chosen to set. He immediately went off to a music shop and bought a number of the songs; on his return home he found a card from Sternfeld, inviting him to the recital by Wolf at five o'clock that same afternoon.

He went, and was introduced to Wolf, whom he was fortunate enough to please at once by a remark that he was glad to make the acquaintance of a musician who only set good poets to music; there was no surer way into Wolf's affection than to approach his own music through the poems. Müller describes him in these terms: "A

small, almost delicate figure, rather stooping, and with the shoulders bent forward. The face pale, with clear traces of heavy spiritual troubles; the hair ash-coloured, erect, and not very abundant; slight moustache and pointed beard; a pair of wonderful deep brown eyes, full of grief and athirst for beauty." He was in a good humour that day, and seemed quietly confident of the impression his songs would make. The tenor engaged instead of Jäger was not at home in the music, and did rather badly in the few songs he sang. He had to leave soon, however, and after his departure Wolf himself rendered the songs. Before touching the piano he would read the words, and call the attention of the audience to the beauty of them. Then he would sing the song in a small, uncultivated voice, but with the most penetrating expression, while he played the piano part in a way that brought everything into the proper focus, the themes standing out with extraordinary clearness, and even the very harmonies taking on peculiar meanings. He sang *Der Musikant*, *Der Schreckenberger*, and *Der Glücksritter*, from the Eichendorff set; *Der Tambour*, *Auf ein altes Bild*, and *Der Feuerreiter* from the Mörike; and *Anakreons Grab* from the Goethe volume. Only twice in the afternoon did he show any annoyance—when a disturbing noise was heard in the hall, and when a certain bass singer asked him to write something for him, a request that met with a curt refusal.[1]

The concert took place on the 5th March and was a great success, in spite of the inefficiency of the tenor and the bad singing of Fräulein Mayer. The lady happening

[1] Max Friedländer, whom Wolf had met in Mainz a year before, was among the audience; and from a remark of Dr. Decsey it seems probable that it is he who is referred to in Müller's story, which, however, Dr. Decsey does not print in his own volume.

to take some liberties with one of the songs, or to offend him in some other way, he spoke angrily to her while he was still accompanying; and although the audience wanted to encore the song he refused to repeat it. In the artists' room he walked up and down excitedly with his hands in his pockets and would not speak to her. She left the town immediately after the concert, and they never met again. The critics were friendly and patronising, but for the most part showed no signs of having plumbed the depths of the music. Wolf, said one of them in all seriousness, resembled Jensen more than Brahms; another found fault with his rhythms, and gravely advised him to go on a little further with his studies in this direction. Only one or two of the writers scented the real significance of the music they had heard. Still the concert had decidedly advanced his prospects in Berlin, and arrangements were made for another in November, at which Frau Herzog was to sing. On the material side the evening was a failure, the receipts being about £11 and the expenses £25.

On the 7th March Wolf spent the evening at the house of the author Fritz Mauthner. His object had been to speak to Sudermann, whom he had already seen, but not spoken to, a few days before, on the subject of an opera libretto; but in the interval he had learned that Sudermann would not undertake a work of this kind, so that the subject was not broached. During the evening Frau Herzog sang some of Wolf's songs to his accompaniment. During *Er ist's* the entry of a late guest disturbed her and she failed to come in promptly at one place. Wolf spoke very roughly to her and ordered her to begin again, which she had the kindness of heart to do in spite of the fact that she was deeply wounded. There is no

doubt he could be exceedingly bearish when anything went wrong with his own music.

He returned to Döbling on the 9th, thoroughly pleased with his brief stay in Berlin, and partly inclined to settle there in preference to Vienna. A cold kept him in bed for nearly a week after his arrival home, and the misery of this increased his growing dislike for Vienna. On the 2nd April he writes to Kauffmann that he is engaged on the instrumentation of the first movement of his *Italienische Serenade*,—a new work for small orchestra, intended to be in three movements,[1] which he had great hopes would be a success. He was still worrying about the projected eleven songs that were to bring the number in the first *Italienisches Liederbuch* up to thirty-three, but the wished-for ideas would not come.

On the 8th April Frau Herzog sang a number of his Mörike and Goethe songs in Berlin with great success, for which service he sent her husband, Dr. Welti, a letter of heartfelt thanks. On the 11th, Ferdinand Jäger sang twelve of the songs at a Vienna concert, Ferdinand Löwe this time accompanying instead of Wolf. The effect on the audience was highly gratifying, and even some of the critics found a good word to say for the music.

On the 15th June Schalk gave a concert performance of the "Fest auf Solhaug" music. The work met with a

[1] Only the first movement was completed. The full score of this has been published, arranged by Max Reger. The other two movements were to have been an Intermezzo and a Tarantelle respectively. The manuscript of the second movement contains only twenty-eight bars; that of the third, written at the beginning of 1899, when Wolf was in Dr. Svetlin's institution, contains about forty bars. In this movement he made use of the well-known Neapolitan song "Funiculi, funicula" of L. Denza, which had immensely pleased him when he first heard it in August 1896. Strauss used the same melody in his "Aus Italien," under the impression that it was a genuine Neapolitan folk-song.

repetition of its previous ill-luck. The copyist had been so long over his work that the parts came too late for rehearsal, and the orchestra had to play the music practically at sight. The singers, too, were incompetent, and the work as a whole found little or no favour with the audience.

In the summer Wolf went to Traunkirchen once more. His health was not particularly good; in one of his letters to Kauffmann he speaks of a confused dream that troubled him night after night. The heat in August was overpowering; his only refuge against it was the humour of Mark Twain, whom he was just then reading with great gusto. In the autumn he returned to Döbling. He was still writing next to nothing; on the 15th October he tells Kauffmann that he is no further with the *Italienisches Liederbuch* and the *Italienische Serenade*, but that he has arranged *Der Feuerreiter*, from the Mörike volume, as a ballad for chorus and orchestra, which Siegfried Ochs is to give in Berlin in the winter. We can see evidence, perhaps, of the bad state of his health at this time in a petulant little outburst, in the same letter, against Frau Herzog. She had really worked pretty hard for him, giving additional performances of his songs in Prague on the 23rd March and in Karlsruhe on the 16th July; but he is irritated with her now for always singing the same songs, and he snaps peevishly through her at the whole race of vocalists. Then he fears that the concert he proposes to give in Berlin will fall through because he cannot find a decent tenor. The first volume of his *Italienisches Liederbuch* is in the press, he says, and he hopes to send Kauffmann a copy at Christmas.

In the new year (1893) the Vienna Wagner-Verein, many of the members of which still kept up their

propaganda for Wolf, tried to get Frau Herzog to their city in order to give a recital of his songs. This proved to be impossible, the conditions of her agreement with the Berlin Opera not permitting it. At several concerts about this time, however, she introduced Wolf's work, notably at Nuremberg, Munich, and Mannheim, bringing the songs in wherever she could, in spite of many discouragements. The chief of these was the lack of pianists capable of playing Wolf's exacting accompaniments properly—an item of which the irate composer apparently did not think when he complained to Kauffmann that Frau Herzog sang always the same songs, and those mostly the simplest of them all. Other vocalists were very slowly taking up the songs; in January 1893, for instance, Fräulein Elisabeth Leisinger gave *Der Genesene an die Hoffnung*, *Der Gärtner*, the *Elfenlied* and *Er ist's* with great success at a Gewandhaus Concert in Leipzig.

During the spring and summer of 1893 Wolf seems to have been in the nervous, unwrought state that had been almost constant with him since the end of 1890. He was further distressed by the death of Jeanne Grohe, the wife of one of his dearest friends; she had given birth to a son on the 27th February, and had died on the 6th April. On the 26th April he writes to Kauffmann that the spring, which was unusually beautiful that year, unsettled and depressed him; he could not bear to see all the new life round him, the continual re-birth in every manifestation of Nature, and contrast it with his own aridity and sterility of soul. "In myself everything is as dead; not even the smallest tone will sound; it is all silent and desert in me, as in a snow-covered field of the dead. God knows how and when this will end!" In order to divert his mind from these gloomy thoughts he had taken up the study of

French, and had got so far that he could read a novel of George Sand with fair ease. He also found pleasure in reading a translation of Aristophanes that Dr. Schmid had sent him. But music in any form was an abomination to him; even to touch the piano sometimes made him ill. In May he went to Traunkirchen, hoping for a better state of health. But in June he raises the old cry of desolation: he could as easily talk Chinese, he tells one correspondent, as compose music. He writes to Kauffmann that he has brought a quantity of music-paper with him, but not a bar has been written; the paper is as virgin-white as when it left the dealer's hands. What can he do, he asks? Wait, and still wait? And he quotes in his bitterness the saying of Nietzsche that there are some men—among whom are the artists—to whom work means nothing if they cannot take pleasure in it; they would rather go under. He finds a little consolation in Nietzsche's further remark that a thinking man's epoch of sterility is just a becalming of the soul, to be followed by the return of the wind and a successful voyage; there is nothing to be done but to sit down and wait. "Is not that finely said?" he cries. "What balsam for my wounds! Only I fear that Nietzsche's first saying will be the more applicable to me,—that I shall go under."

In July he resolved to leave Traunkirchen, thinking that a change of scene would bring back the faculty for work; for one thing the incessant singing of the birds irritated him in his then nervous mood. Where to go he had not settled; he thought alternatively of his native Windischgraz and of his Döbling quarters. A month later, however, he was still in Traunkirchen, where Grohe paid him a visit. The birds annoyed him less, but there was still no music in him. He speaks of it in a kind of

terror; when and how will it end? he always asks. To keep his mind occupied he had been for some time working hard at his piano technique, and was pleased with the progress he made. It opened up to him in particular Beethoven's latest sonatas, of which the wonderful architecture was now first made clear to him. Without losing any of his old admiration for Wagner, he felt it a relief to turn from the dramatist's nervous strains to the monumental, open-air work of Beethoven. A short stay in Windischgraz resulted only in boredom, and in October he was glad to find himself back in Vienna.

At this time Wolf used to rehearse with the tenor Ernest van Dyck, who was then connected with the Vienna Opera House, and was studying the part of Siegmund for a Paris production of "The Ring." Wolf had hopes, which were never realised, that Van Dyck would do something for his songs. These found, however, a new prophet in 1893 in Hugo Faisst, a "Rechtsanwalt" in Stuttgart with a good baritone voice, who conceived an unbounded admiration for the songs after reading an article of Kauffmann's upon them. On the 30th October 1893 he sang some of them at a Wolf concert in Tübingen. A few weeks earlier he had written to Wolf, whose thanks he received for his enthusiasm. This was the commencement of a correspondence of the greatest interest, extending to September 1898; one hundred and seven of Wolf's letters to Faisst have been published. The propaganda also went on bravely in other quarters. On the 1st December there was a Wolf evening in Graz; Dr. Friedrich von Hausegger and other writers published articles on him in the local papers almost every day for a month before the concert. The singers were August Krämer and his wife Marie Krämer-Widl; Wolf was the

accompanist. Twenty-seven of his songs were given—eight Mörike, four Eichendorff, seven Goethe, and eight Spanish; all were received with enthusiasm, and many of them had to be repeated.

Wolf had intended, in case the Graz concert turned out a pecuniary success, to go for a short time to Venice, where he hoped that the climate and the surroundings might set him in the right mood again to work at the *Italienisches Liederbuch*. His profit from the recital was 230 gulden (about £19), but he returned to Vienna with it, and there debated for some time whether he should go to Venice or to Berlin. He finally decided on Berlin, where a concert had been arranged by Siegfried Ochs for the 8th January at which Wolf's choral ballads, the *Feuerreiter* and the *Elfenlied* were to be given,—Fräulein de Jong taking the solo part in the latter work,—as well as the "Te Deum" of Bruckner. The two composers travelled together to Berlin, arriving there on the 5th January; they were met at the station by Richard Sternfeld and by Karl Muck—Wolf's old associate at Salzburg, who was now stationed in Berlin as a conductor. Wolf became the guest of Baron von Lipperheide in the Potsdamerstrasse. He was very pleased with the way the *Feuerreiter* and the *Elfenlied* went at rehearsal next day; it was the first time he had heard the works, and he was especially glad to find that the orchestration came out as he had intended. He was put a little out of tune on learning that the great Mignon ballad had been taken out of the programme, and *Anakreons Grab* and *Margits Gesang* (from "Der Fest auf Solhaug") substituted for it. It only needed a very little spark to set him on fire when he fell into a mood like this. The spark was not long in coming. The singer took *Margits Gesang* in a rather

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slow tempo; in reply to Wolf's angry protest, Ochs, who was conducting, gently pointed out that he and the singer were merely following Wolf's own tempo mark,—the only effect of which was a still more furious outburst from Wolf. In the end, however, peace and good feeling were restored.

That evening—the 6th—Wolf heard Muck conduct Bruckner's seventh symphony in the opera house; here he was introduced by Ochs to E. O. Nodnagel, the song-composer, who sincerely admired Wolf, studied his songs attentively, sang them in public for a time, and wrote helpful critical articles upon them. Nodnagel has related how excited Wolf was at the rehearsal, for he felt that a great deal depended on the success of this concert. All went well until *Anakreons Grab* was given; the singer performed the usual stupid singer's trick of finishing up on a high note, and Wolf, says Nodnagel, positively howled with rage.

The concert took place on the 8th. After Bach's D minor Toccata, played by Dr. Reimann, and Eugen D'Albert's six-part chorus "Der Mensch und das Leben," came *Anakreons Grab* and *Margits Gesang*. Both the songs fell flat. The two choral works, however, were splendidly rendered both by chorus and by orchestra, and received with the greatest enthusiasm; the *Elfenlied*—on which, said Wolf in his letter to Kauffmann, the audience fell like the bear on the honey—had to be repeated. There were loud cries for the composer, but he declined to appear; he had walked away and hidden himself at the back of the hall. He returned to his box when the tumult had subsided, was at once recognised, and had to bow his acknowledgments right and left. Bruckner's "Te Deum," with which the programme ended, was also highly

successful. Altogether, in spite of the failure of the two songs, Wolf had every reason to be pleased with the results of the concert. The critics next day were mostly very appreciative, and the success of the *Elfenlied* caused the publishers Ries and Erler to make Wolf an offer for it. The negotiations with them fell through, but the score was ultimately bought by Fürstner for 300 marks (£15).

Wolf would have liked to have given a concert of his own in Berlin with Frau Herzog, but it could not be arranged. He called upon her, and in the course of the visit Richard Strauss entered; he had come to show Frau Herzog his latest song. Dr. Welti introduced the two composers to each other, but no conversation took place between them. Wolf then had hopes of interesting Lilli Lehmann in his work sufficiently to induce her to give a Liederabend with him, but as he was informed that it was useless to call on her for this purpose, the idea of the visit was abandoned. No concert being possible in Berlin, Wolf gave himself up to the joys of social intercourse,—met all kinds of men and women, behaved as usual like a bear to the mere society people he did not like, and showed himself charming, humorous, and talkative with those he did. A little circle calling itself the "Zwanglosen" had been in the habit of assembling each Friday in a certain *Bierlokal*. The 21st January was the tenth anniversary of the founding of the society; a special evening was made of it, and Wolf and several ladies were invited. Wolf took some time to come out of his shell, but afterwards was a very merry companion. From 9 p.m. to 1 a.m., says Dr. Decsey, he was scarcely noticed by anyone; from 1 to 4 he was the centre of the gathering.

Among the old Berlin acquaintances whom he met again on this visit was the author Fritz Mauthner. Wolf had been struck with a short novel of his and thought it would make a good one-act opera. Mauthner, who was by way of being a bit of a musician himself, accommodatingly offered not only to arrange the libretto but to supply Wolf with a number of old Bohemian and other melodies for the opera, — a suggestion which was of course enough to make Wolf close the subject abruptly.

Just before he left Berlin he went with Sternfeld to Wannsee, near Potsdam, to see the grave of one of his favourite poets, the unfortunate Heinrich von Kleist, the author of "Penthesilea." He departed next day, the 25th January, for Darmstadt, where the local Wagner-Verein was to hold a Wagner-evening. His travelling companion was Mauthner. Wolf had by this time got over his irritation at the novelist's offer of Bohemian melodies, and they talked again of co-operating in an opera, but nothing came of it. At Darmstadt he had a pleasant surprise. He had gone there much against his will, knowing that Arnold Mendelssohn would be there; and as Mendelssohn was the closest friend of Wette, with whom Wolf had quarrelled some time before, the thought of the meeting was exceedingly painful. He encountered Mendelssohn in the concert room but held himself mistrustfully aloof from him; then, to his astonishment, he learned that it was through Mendelssohn's exertions that the concert had been arranged.

The concert, which was given in one of the rooms of a hotel, passed off very successfully. When it was over, Grohe, who had come from Mannheim for it, asked Wolf to come to a little supper with some of the members of the committee and their friends. It was of no avail for

Grohe to say that the gathering was to be quite a small and quiet one; Wolf opened the door of the supper room, looked in, saw places laid for twenty people, with one decorated seat of honour in the middle, and incontinently fled the hotel; he knew that it meant speeches from his hosts and a reply from himself. Grohe had to go back and make the excuse that the composer had been suddenly taken ill. An hour later Wolf met Grohe at the station, and the two went off to Mannheim together. Here Wolf made the personal acquaintance of Hugo Faisst, from Stuttgart, with whom he had been corresponding since the previous October. He met Wolf on the stairs of his hotel; Wolf instantly carried him off to Grohe's house, where the two plunged into the songs, Faisst singing and Wolf accompanying. A cuckoo-clock, with the customary irrelevance of its breed, interrupted them in *Anakreons Grab*; Wolf showed his usual irritation, and the offender had to be ejected from the room.

From Mannheim he went on to Stuttgart, where another Wolf-concert was given on the 7th February, Fräulein Zerny, Karl Diezel and Hugo Faisst singing, and Wolf himself accompanying; they had had hard work to induce him to do so, as he wanted to go to the opera to hear D'Andrade in "Don Giovanni." He went back to Mannheim for another recital and then to Tübingen, where Fräulein Zerny, Diezel, and Faisst sang at a matinée. All the concerts were successful, both artistically and financially. These were the last concerts of the tour. Wolf returned to Stuttgart and spent a week with Faisst, for whom he had conceived a great personal liking. Through Faisst he met a number of notable Swabian people, including Apollo Klinckerfuss — the representative of Bechstein and Blüthner—and his wife

the Marquis delle Valle di Casanova,—who is frequently mentioned in the letters to Faisst,—and the poet Richard Voss. With the last-named and his enthusiasm for Wolf's songs the composer was at first rather taken, and he thought of co-operating in an opera with him. His feelings, however, soon veered round; he conceived a dislike for the poet that was probably a little irrational, but quite unalterable.

He returned to Vienna at the end of February, out of tune with his surroundings there, after the cordiality shown him in Swabia, in the same way that he had previously felt an antipathy to Vienna after his return from Berlin. From a letter to Kauffmann of the 7th March it appears that about this time he entertained the idea of making a concert tour in America,—a project that was never carried out. He was brightened up a little by a visit of Faisst and Fräulein Zerny, who, together with Ferdinand Jäger, gave a recital of his songs in Vienna on the 31st March. Faisst had wanted to include the *Prometheus*, but Wolf felt compelled to veto this, as it would have made the programme too long. On the 14th April another recital was given in Graz by Fräulein Zerny and Faisst, but Jäger was too unwell to appear. Wolf acted as accompanist.

These signs of appreciation in other towns gladdened him for the time, but back in Vienna again his old miseries returned. He was still unable to compose, still unable to find the opera-text which, he thought, would set the music imprisoned within him at liberty once more. On the 16th June he declined an invitation from Faisst's mother to spend some time at her house in Heilbronn, on the ground that he had lately conceived a horror of human-kind; he would, he said, cut only a

mournful figure in the happy house-circle, and be a burden to himself and everyone about him. This apparently brought a letter from Faisst with an attempt at consolation and encouragement. In his reply on the 21st June, Wolf gives even freer expression to his gloom. "You would drop balsam on my wounds? If it were only possible! But for my woes there is no medicine on this earth; only a god can help me out of them. Give me some ideas again, shake the sleeping demon in me and awaken him, and I will worship you like a god and erect altars to you. But this is an appeal to the gods, not to man. Be it left to them to decide my fate. Whatever happens, even if things go to the worst, I will bear it, even if no ray of sunshine shall ever light up my mournful existence again. And so we will close this melancholy chapter of my life and put it on the shelf once for all."

At the end of July 1894 he went to Traunkirchen, where he wanted Faisst to visit him, promising to show him, if he came, a ballad by Loewe that would exactly suit his voice. A month after he went to Lenbach to meet Grohe, whence he proceeded to Schloss Matzen, Baron von Lipperheide's place near Brixlegg in the Tyrol. Here he stayed most of the time until the middle of October. He seems to have been happy with the company at Schloss Matzen, but did one typically stupid thing, as he confessed to Faisst in a letter of 23rd September. Hearing that the Grand Duke of Weimar was coming he ran away to Innsbruck. Afterwards he learned that the Grand Duke knew some of his work and was much interested in him, had inquired after him, and was disappointed at not being able to make his personal acquaintance.

At this time he thought seriously of settling in Berlin, where Baron von Lipperheide offered to provide him with a home for a time. If not altogether abandoned, the plan was put aside for the moment; towards the end of October he went back to Vienna, becoming the guest of his friend Eckstein. In November he removed to his old quarters in Perchtoldsdorf, hoping, he said, that to live again in the room where he had done so much work would have the happy effect of opening a new period of creative activity for him.

On the 2nd December his *Elfenlied* and *Feuerreiter* were given for the first time in Vienna at a Gesellschaft concert, Wilhelm Gericke conducting, and Fräulein Sophie Chotek singing the solo part in the *Elfenlied.* The works were enthusiastically received; Brahms was present, and an eye-witness speaks of having seen him applaud warmly, notwithstanding the many sharp things Wolf had said of him in earlier years. The critics were well-disposed, even Hanslick graciously saying that these were the two best works he had heard of Wolf's; he praised the declamation, the writing for the voice, the orchestral colouring, and the ideas in general, and was good enough to wind up with the remark that Wolf was undoubtedly a man of intelligence and talent.

Towards the end of the month Humperdinck visited Vienna for the production of his "Hänsel and Gretel," and spent about a week in Wolf's company. The new year opened promisingly on the whole. Early in January 1895 the *Feuerreiter* and *Elfenlied* were given at a Gürzenich concert in Cologne, under Dr. Wüllner, and again in Stuttgart on the 29th under Hermann Zumpe.[1] In both

[1] The two works were repeated in Stuttgart at the end of September of the same year.

towns the works made a great impression. Just then things seemed rather rosier than usual to him; he had found at last, in a novel of Alarcon, the subject for his opera *Der Corregidor*, and he had hopes of making a big success with his choral *Hymnus an dem Vaterland*. Through the German embassy in Berlin he had asked permission to dedicate this to the German Emperor, a request which the Emperor, unaware of the honour that was done him, was unwise enough to decline. Wolf philosophically told Faisst that he was not in the least grieved at the decision of his Imperial Majesty, and found ample compensation in a performance of the work by the Vienna Männergesangverein on the 24th March 1895, under Eduard Kremser. He sent the score of *Dem Vaterland* to Schott for publication, and settled down to the composition of his opera *Der Corregidor* in his room in Perchtoldsdorf. The curious intuition expressed in his letter of 3rd November 1894 was fully justified; the room in which the Mörike and Spanish songs had been written witnessed also the birth of the opera, the story of the long search for which must now be told in full.

CHAPTER VI

THE QUEST OF THE OPERA

AS we have seen, Wolf's thoughts were first turned towards the operatic stage in 1882, after his experiences as Kapellmeister at Salzburg. At that time he sketched out the scenario of a light opera. It was in this form alone that he could think of himself as an opera composer, his acute sense of the overwhelming power of Wagner no doubt making him regard grand opera as a field closed to all other men of his generation. One of his early projects was to write an opera on the subject of Shakespeare's "Midsummer Night's Dream"; he burst into Ferdinand Löwe's room one morning, when Löwe was at breakfast with a friend, and talked for half an hour about the play and its suitability for operatic treatment. He must have gradually changed his opinion, however, although the fairy world still occupied his thoughts; nothing came of the "Midsummer Night's Dream," but the stimulus it gave to his imagination found expression ultimately in the *Elfenlied*. It was towards the end of the eighties that he once more felt a strong desire to work at an opera. Sometimes he thought of advertising for a text, at others of being his own librettist,—though he quickly realised and candidly confessed his hopeless inefficiency in this respect. His friend Grohe had asked

him whether he was a poet. "Would I were!" he sighs in his reply of the 6th May 1890; "I have too great a respect for poetry to cobble at it mechanically. I assure you that Odysseus cannot have looked more longingly towards his native shore than I look out for a dramatic poet. Ah, shall I ever find him?" A few weeks later, writing to Schur, he says he has made some poetical attempts, but that he can only poetise "with the head," which is not at all the right thing. To Schur, a bank official who cultivated mild poetry as a hobby in his leisure hours, he addressed an exhortation to "scan industriously and drink much black coffee" and then make him a libretto. Poor Schur had little peace for some time. On the 28th May 1890 Wolf wrote to him outlining a new plan—

"You know that a little while ago I was very much occupied with the idea of writing a purely orchestral work on the subject of Shakespeare's 'Tempest.' I have now gone carefully again through the enchanting comedy, with the view of a symphonic orchestral treatment of it. But the more I exerted myself to get a clear conception of the work in its simplest features, the more animatedly did the variegated splendour of this fine series of pictures—so unified in its contrasts—impress itself upon my faculty of imagination. Great Heaven, I thought, if this is not an opera-subject fallen from heaven into your lap, what more do you expect? What do you say, friend Schur? Prospero! what a majestic bass! Ferdinand, Miranda,—a love-pair like Adam and Eve! Ariel!—I hear already the loveliest *colorature*!!! And Caliban and Trinculo and Stephano? Such a trefoil!!! What do you say? I have already sketched a scenario. The first scene stands as it is, the second ditto, only with important abbreviations (but

Prospero in the second scene—how Wagnerian!) From page 17 ('Universalbibliothek,' Schlegel's translation) I take out the scene with Caliban, and bring in Ferdinand at once. The Act can conclude as in Shakespeare. In the second Act the first scene comes out altogether; the Act begins with the prodigiously characteristic second scene of Caliban. Imagine the crazy scene between Caliban, Trinculo and Stephano; it will make people burst! In this scene the attempt on Prospero must be schemed. The scene can close with the bestial drinking-song of Caliban. The commencement of the third Act of Shakespeare gives the second scene of my second Act; on the other hand Shakespeare's second scene must come out and make the third scene of the second Act. The second Act closes with the goblin-hunt of the conspirators by Ariel and his fellow-spirits. In the third Act (Shakespeare's fifth) the whole personality of Prospero unfolds itself. Antonio, Gonzalo, etc., would in this Act, as in general throughout the work, just be visible in the background. This is a flying sketch of my views."

On the 6th June, still full of the subject, he wrote to Grohe in much the same terms, giving the details of the proposed scenario. He had abandoned the idea of making a symphonic poem of "The Tempest," he says, because as he pondered over the work he was less and less struck with the central idea of it, and more captivated by the series of vivid pictures it contained. "This is at last the much-sought opera subject—long-desired, ardently-wished-for, incessantly-appearing and incessantly-vanishing, but finally surprised and clutched fast, never again to be lost. And the comic element! what a glorious field to work in! Caliban, Trinculo, Stephano! Here is a set of fellows I have always longed for."

Schur had to have recourse to a certain Heinrich Rauchberg and to Richard Genée; Wolf particularly wanted the opinion of the latter, as he was a composer of operettas and therefore a "practical man." Genée, however, was not much use to him, and Wolf had to give up the idea of his co-operation. "I certainly cannot use Shakespeare's verses," he wrote on 9th June; "on the other hand I lay great weight on a poetical diction. I think of making a proposition to Liliencron.[1] What do you say about it? Unfortunately I cannot now give myself up completely to the idea of 'The Tempest,' for Kauffmann in Tübingen urges me to send him my patriotic work[2] as soon as possible, and the instrumentation of this absorbs all my time. In a few days I hope to have finished with this and with the Keller songs, of which I have now composed a second. Then like a tempest to 'The Tempest.'" The matter, however, went no further at that time, and when Wolf thought of it again, some two years later, "The Tempest" struck him as quite unsuitable for an opera, because "too unmodern."

Meanwhile he had actually applied to Liliencron for a libretto of a light nature, the opera to occupy a complete evening in performance; if an original subject could not be found he suggested "The Tempest." On 16th June Wolf wrote to a friend that Liliencron had sent him a letter of eight pages that was hardly legible, "in which, with many flatteries, he tells me that he will not venture to touch Shakespeare. He offers me a tragedy, the scene of which is laid in North America. But in spite of my enthusiasm for Buffalo Bill and his unwashed troop, I prefer the homeland and its native inhabitants, who know

[1] Detlev von Liliencron, the German poet.
[2] The *Hymnus an dem Vaterland.*

the advantages of soap." Grohe agreed neither with this scheme nor with that of "The Tempest," and tried to interest Wolf in a Buddhistic libretto by Karl Heckel, of Mannheim.[1] He states in detail his objections to the Indian subject in two letters to Grohe. The new "Buddha" could only be a variant of "Parsifal." The world, he says, does not yet realise the philosophic depths of Wagner's last message, so that there is no need for someone else to give it more of the same kind of thing to digest. He feels his own place to be "not in the wilderness with water and grasshoppers and wild honey, but in gladsome, original company,—guitar-thrummings, love-sighs, moonlit nights, champagne revels, and so on; in fact in a comic[2] opera, a quite ordinary comic opera without the world-redeeming apparition of a Schopenhauerian philosopher in the background. . . . Find me the poet, and you shall see that a dozen Buddhas cannot weigh against a quite everyday but original little comic opera."

In a second letter to Grohe, on the 23rd July 1890, he gives in further detail his reasons for not taking to the Eastern subject.

"You seem to attribute my aversion to composing a Buddha to a momentary hostility of mood, and to doubt whether I am really deeply penetrated by the Buddhistic world-view, and recognise in asceticism alone the one healer of our sinful world. Before the imperishable

[1] Heckel afterwards became the publisher of most of Wolf's works, the composer becoming dissatisfied with Schotts and taking the songs out of their hands.

[2] The German epithet is always "komisch." In translating this as "comic opera," it is necessary to warn the English reader against the false connotations that the term may set up with us, with whom comic opera has come to mean little more than musical farce.

ethical value of the life and the teaching of Buddha I prostrate myself as a human being. But as an artist, and especially as an artist dealing with the life of Buddha, asceticism and the redemption that is supposed to come by means of it are not in themselves sufficient to me. I necessarily want a strong contrast that shall be so clear as to be immediately perceptible,—for instance, Kundry and the scene of the Flower Maidens. Wagner always managed a great dramatic mystery with the most extraordinary dexterity; he was never monotonous, never tedious; he often painted in a decided grey, but he always took care to have many varied tints on his palette. And now look at ——'s Buddha. It simply gives me the impression of an uninterrupted three-weeks'-long rainfall in our Salzkammergut. Not a single ray of sunshine, hardly even a flash of storm with thunder and lightning. Now the public, and especially the theatrical public, likes variety, wherefore it shows most permanent liking for the cheerful and the pleasant. Asceticism is right enough to preach, but not to represent on the stage. A dramatic poet of a pessimistic world-view must always bear this in mind. I find the 'open mystery' in the present form much too out-of-date, the figures conventional and constructed on a pattern. Besides, the well-intentioned nature of the subject seems to promise only a meagre musical profit. At any rate it would be better to wait a little longer for the 'chosen' poet than to snatch at anything so long as it is an opera. My songs were not picked up in the streets; neither will the opera be."

About this time, however, he met with the novel which was ultimately, after being given up in despair and set aside for some years, to become the basis of his opera.

Four years previously, in 1886, there had appeared in Reclam's "Universalbibliothek" a German translation, under the title of "Der Dreispitz," of a novel by the Spanish author Pedro de Alarcon (1813–1891). Its sunny charm and gaiety had made it instantly popular, and more than one musician cast covetous eyes on it. Adalbert von Goldschmidt called Wolf's attention to it, just at the time when the composer was full of his Spanish songs, and so peculiarly sympathetic towards a story with a southern *milieu*.

"Der Dreispitz" struck him as a thoroughly good subject, and he accordingly set to work to fashion it into a libretto. In this, however, he was no more successful than in previous attempts of the same kind. Probably the scheme would have perished like so many others had it not fallen, almost by accident, into the hands of someone at that time a stranger to Wolf, who brought it to fruition, though not indeed till some years later. In 1890, as we have seen, the composer was very friendly with Herr Edmund and Frau Marie Lang, who had a summer residence near Vienna. Among their friends was an architect, Julius Mayreder, who also had a house in the neighbourhood. Mayreder's sister-in-law, Frau Rosa Mayreder, occupied herself with literature, and Julius conceived the idea of getting her to cast "Der Dreispitz" into operatic form. After much debating of the subject — Frau Lang in particular being strongly against the plan, on the grounds that Wolf, who was so fastidious with regard to poets of reputation, would hardly think much of an amateur—it was decided that Frau Rosa should set to work. This she did without Wolf having any knowledge of what was on foot. When the manuscript was ready it was sent to him anonymously.

The result was unexpectedly disconcerting. "Two days later Wolf stormed into Lang's house, threw the manuscript on the table, and sat for some moments in silence on the divan. Then he asked Lang earnestly, 'Did you write that?' 'No.' 'Or perhaps your wife?' 'No, nor she either.' 'Thank God! that would have been dreadful!' said Wolf, much relieved. And then he broke out into the sharpest, most pitiless criticism of it. He was especially exasperated by the banality of the diction. 'Away with it,' was the end. The Langs were quite despondent, but there was no reply possible. With heavy hearts they gave the text-book back to the authoress."

Frau Rosa Mayreder has given us[1] her own story of the episode and what followed it. She surmises that in the interval between the reading of the novel and the reception of the manuscript, Wolf's enthusiasm for the subject had cooled down,—though this is hardly consistent with the foregoing account of Frau Lang, according to which the libretto failed to please Wolf by reason of its literary shortcomings.

Disappointed with the outcome of the "Dreispitz" scheme, Wolf turned once more to Detlev von Liliencron. The Indian drama—"Pokahontas"—seemed to him more suitable for a pantomime than an opera, and he wondered whether work of that kind would be worthy of an artist. Then "Pokahontas" is dismissed from his mind altogether, even in the form of a pantomime. What does Liliencron think of a subject like the "Amor and Psyche" of Apuleius? "That would be the genuine, ideal pantomime"; he hopes to talk the matter over with Liliencron

[1] In the volume *Der Corregidor: Kritische und biographische Beiträge zu seiner Würdigung* (1900).

in Munich. But of this plan, like so many others, nothing was destined to come.

Still his mind ran incessantly upon an opera. In September he wrote to Schur that he is again happy and contented, "in spite of the cursed opera-text, that still cannot be found." He had been reading Wagner's "Communication to my Friends," where there is mention of an opera on the subject of the Saracens, which Wagner had at one time thought of, but only to come to the conclusion that the scheme was bad. Opera-texts, says Wolf, paraphrasing Wagner's deduction in a curt phrase, must fall into the composer's lap. "Oh, if only I knew the confounded trees on which opera-texts grow; for patient waiting I could outdo Job." A libretto, "Hildebrands Heimkehr," which someone had sent him, was rejected as quite impossible. For a time he thought of turning Ibsen's "Fest auf Solhaug" into an opera; but his enthusiasm for the play soon cooled down, though the composition of the incidental music to it, he tells Grohe on the 18th December 1890, convinced him more than ever that he had a gift for opera. In June 1891 he was still in search of the undiscoverable; "I cry out for a light opera," he wrote to Eckstein, "with ten times more anguish than the hart in the Bible cried out for water." He had been experimenting to some extent, as we have seen, in larger forms than that of the song—writing the incidental music for Ibsen's play, scoring some of his songs for orchestra, and either writing ballads for chorus and orchestra or rearranging some of his songs in that medium; the *Hymnus an dem Vaterland*, for example, had originally been conceived as a song for a solo voice. He had tasted the enchantment of handling larger masses and achieving more varied colour-effects, and the idea

obsessed him till it became a torture that only in the opera could he find a full outlet for his powers. His imagination was now at its richest; his technique and his faculty of expression were completely under his control; and no doubt the song would sometimes appear to him too small a form to contain all the music that was in him.

His friends gave him no rest. In the spring of 1891 Emil Kauffmann urged him to set to work on an opera. Wolf was willing, but pleaded, as he so frequently had to do, the difficulty of finding a good text. "I understand quite well," he writes, "your conjuring up once more before me, more insistently than ever, the spectre of comic opera. It would give me uncommon pleasure to meet with a sorcerer who had sufficient poetry and dramatic talent to conjure this dreadful spectre into an acceptable form, let it be 'Gil Blas' or 'Don Quixote' or anything else." He is going to make an attempt with a Herr Haser to concoct a libretto, though he is not sanguine as to the result of the collaboration. He also asks Kauffmann to induce a Herr Ruthardt—a teacher at the Leipzig Conservatoire—to hasten with the opera-text he has in hand. From a letter of Wolf's of 1st June 1891 it appears that nothing is to be hoped for in either of these quarters. "I thought as much," he writes; "I am beginning to believe that opera-texts are Fata Morgana, things of real impossibility. 'Wahn! Wahn! Ueberall Wahn!' I decline to hear anything more about them." And then he lets us see how deeply the idea of becoming an opera writer has sunk into his soul. "I could almost believe that I have come to the end of my life. I cannot go on for yet another thirty years writing just songs or music to Ibsen dramas. And yet the ardently-desired opera will

never come. I am really at the end. May it soon be a complete one—there is nothing I long for more."

About this time, as we have seen, his creative powers were suspended, much to his annoyance; he had probably got out of tune with the song, and yet could not work at opera for lack of a text that would satisfy his fastidious sense. Towards the end of June he breaks out angrily, in a letter to Kauffmann, *à propos* of another libretto, "The Masterthief," that has been sent to him by some luckless person whose name is charitably suppressed in the printed correspondence: it is "the most insipid, the most talentless, the most brainless, the dullest, in short the most horrible piece of bungling possible. . . ." The libretto was a mass of defects—undramatic in plan and execution, and without the semblance of character-drawing. Grohe was no happier in a suggestion that a comedy of Otto Ludwig's—"Hans Frei"—might serve. It reminds Wolf too much of Shakespeare's "Much Ado about Nothing,"—to say nothing of Ludwig's "impossible, home-baked diction"; it is a subject for Lortzing, not for him. "I understand," he goes on, "that in Paris just now there is a strong tendency against naturalism, which chiefly finds expression in symbolical drama and comedy,—for the marionette theatre, indeed. Perhaps something may be hoped for from this quarter."

Still the long-desired text would not come, though he read through dozens of librettos, printed or in manuscript. "I have," he writes to Grohe on the 9th January 1892, "a small library of the most atrocious, most brutish, most murderous, most imbecile, hair-lifting, corpse-mutilating opera-texts,—tragic, comic, tragi-comic, comic-tragic,—in short, everything but what I want. I shudder when the post brings me a parcel or a roll, having a foreboding of

the ghastly, inevitable things to which my passion for opera condemns me." A couple of months later he writes in post haste to Grohe, bidding him read Alarcon's novel "Manuel Venegas" and give him an opinion upon it. This, he thinks, will make the drama he wants—"action, characterisation, men, colour, passion, music,—in a word, genuinely Spanish and yet human into the bargain,—a wonderful piece of painting, with a purple-black understratum of mysticism, vivacious, natural in savour, and realistic in the extreme." From the same letter it appears that there had been a hope, which was never realised, of getting a suitable libretto from Ernst von Wolzogen.[1]

Meanwhile his friend Schur had been working on his own account at a scenario of "Manuel Venegas." He sent this to Wolf in April 1892. Wolf never minced his words when art was in question, and his letter to Grohe of the 20th April is cruelly frank on the defects of Schur's scenario. "For an art-loving bank-official it is a quite respectable performance,—on the presupposition that another art-loving bank-official would have the setting of it to music. For me, however, his scenario is not much good,"—among its faults being the undramatic narration by the characters of all that had happened before the time of the action. Genée, to whom he owed his introduction to Alarcon's novel, not being able to help him, Wolf applied to his friend Adalbert von Goldschmidt. The latter drew up a scenario, which he sent to Wette in Cologne to be versified, his own powers in this respect being very limited. Wolf accordingly wrote to Wette on the 22nd July 1892 on the subject of "Manuel Venegas," giving him minute instructions as to how he would like

[1] Wolzogen is the author of the text of Strauss's opera "Feuersnot."

the work done. Wette, however, threw cold water on the whole scheme; he did not like the scenario, and sent Wolf in its stead a libretto of his own—"Elsi, die seltsame Magd." It is presumably to this that Wolf refers in angry, contemptuous terms in a letter to Grohe of 10th August. "Wette has sent me an opera-book as an example of his genius. It surpasses in clumsiness, imbecility, brutality, and absurdity everything that has yet been produced in this much-defiled *genre*. When I excused myself, in the most careful way, from co-operating with him, he became very rude and treated me as an ignoramus." The two friends could not see eye to eye with each other, and ultimately drifted into a quarrel that was never made up.

So he goes on lamenting, in letter after letter, the impossibility of finding the librettist he desires. In February 1893 he heard from Dr. Strecker of the Duke of Coburg-Gotha's offer of a prize of 5000 marks for a one-act opera. Strecker sent him the libretto of "Acteon," by Scribe, which Auber had already set. The thing itself was not bad, Wolf wrote to Grohe, but it smacked too much of a bygone day for him to be able to compose music to it. "Again I stand before a sphinx,—the poet,—for myself I cannot do it." The 5000 marks were an undeniable attraction, but on the other hand, Wolf had not much liking for the Mascagni type of opera—brutal, superficial, and wholly theatrical. So he let the scheme go by, and turned to a comedy of Grillparzer—"Wehr dem, der lügt." Of this he made a scenario, only to wring his hands once more in despair at being unable to find a poet; and in May 1893 this plan also was put aside as impracticable.

Meanwhile he had been reading more texts that had

been sent him. All were hopeless. One, a "Zenobia" by a certain Herr G. S., was especially foolish. In February 1894 his friend Kauffmann suggested as a possible subject a story by the poet Eichendorff—"Das Schloss Dürande." This drew from Wolf an interesting letter that gives us an insight into his opinions on the subject of opera libretti. He has read the story again at Kauffmann's request, and feels bound to reject it. "The characteristic *chiaroscuro* of Eichendorff's mood is not at all compatible with the glaring lamplight of the stage. I might describe his stories as poetised landscape pictures, in which the figures play only a quite secondary rôle, something like what painters call *Staffage* (accessories). On the stage, on the contrary, the scene is the *Staffage*, and the characters have to come into the foreground, indeed with the utmost possible distinctness. Now look for a moment in this light at one of Eichendorff's characters. Apart from the costume and a bit of colour there is nothing characteristic to be observed in it, nor is there any trace of clear drawing or psychological portraiture—only vague, shadowy outlines, without physiognomy, without personality, that suddenly start up like dream-phantoms, one knows not whence, and then evaporate again, one knows not whither. They pass away like clouds in the sky, or, to employ an image of Eichendorff's, go by like quiet dreams, taking now this now that form and figure. It may all be very beautiful and thoroughly poetical, it is true, and may occupy the fantasy very agreeably; but on the stage it is no good at all."

Towards the end of the same year his need for a text oppressed him till it became a positive anguish. He felt that his inspiration could never flow again with its old copiousness until he found what he calls "the delivering

word." We learn from his letters that someone had sent him in October a libretto drawn from Shakespeare's "Tempest," which his fastidious critical sense at once rejected. "It is called 'Prospero,'" he writes to Faisst on the 4th October, "and is nothing more than an unheard-of, unspeakable, perfectly scandalous botch of Shakespeare's 'Tempest.' I can't understand our friend [*i.e.* Oscar Grohe, through whom the manuscript had reached Wolf] inflicting such a thing on me.[1] How long-suffering paper is!" To Grohe himself, on the 7th, he wrote in still stronger terms, pouring a molten flood of ridicule on the librettist's attempts at assonance and onomatopœia in the style of Wagner. "O you accursed poet-brood," he cries at the finish of the letter, "with your crazy vanity, your absurd pretensions, your maniacal self-sufficiency, your diabolical infatuation. You are only fit to be put in a sack and sunk in the most poisonous swamp among toads and loathsome reptiles,—you who make so familiar with sun, moon, and stars, which would be extinguished with shame and grief if they were not luckily deaf to your villainous whinings. Dear friend, don't bring me any more so-called poets."

In December yet another text came to him; he speaks briefly of this in a letter to Faisst of the 30th of that month, expressing the hope that it will set him composing again; the third Act, however, needs a radical alteration. More particulars are found in a letter to Kauffmann of 7th January 1895, in which Wolf tells his friend how comfortable he is in Eckstein's house, and how happy he would be if only the ice that held his imagination bound would melt. "If only the so painfully longed-for productivity would come, nothing more would

[1] Wolf's real language is a little more forcible than this.

be wanting to complete my happiness; unfortunately however I still cannot find the right magic word that will rouse this mysterious force out of its slumber. One of my friends has indeed exerted himself to put the delivering word in my mouth, to loosen my tongue at last; but I fear that only the genuine and true poet can achieve this. Friend Schaumann, the president of our [*i.e.* the Vienna] Wagner-Verein, a man of unquestionable cleverness and ingenuity, has undertaken to perform this labour of love for me; he proposes a charming novel of the Spaniard Pedro de Alarcon as opera-text for me. The spirit is quite willing, but the flesh is weak. The name of the Spanish poet will be remembered by you on account of his master-novel 'Manuel Venegas.' This latter unhappily proves too coy for dramatising; so we must make the attempt with the 'Dreispitz,'—for that is the name of the novel in question. Is it going to succeed? I doubt it. Get the book, however, which may be had in the 'Universalbibliothek' for 20 pfennigs. If the matter interests you, I will send you the opera-poem, which lies before me finished. In the meanwhile I have established ideas only upon the third Act; in its present form it is absolutely no use. Unfortunately there is also much that is faulty in the first two Acts, although there is much in them that is creditable to the author. In short, first of all look at the novel; then we will discuss the matter further." Wolf did not imagine, when he wrote these lines, that the "Dreispitz," turned into a libretto by another hand than Schaumann's, was to become the basis of his first opera, *Der Corregidor*, while *Manuel Venegas* was to be his second,—a work that unhappily remains only a fragment.

It did not take him long to realise that at last he had

found, in "Der Dreispitz," the subject he had so long desired. "You will have already heard through friend Grohe," he writes to Faisst on the 30th January, "that at last I have found the right opera-text. The piece is extraordinarily effective, the language distinguished and characteristic, the action animated and exciting. The text is called 'Der Dreispitz,' after the Spanish novel of Pedro de Alarcon. You can get the story for twelve pfennigs in Reclam's edition. Read it and write me at once saying how it pleases you." Twelve days earlier he had burst out jubilantly in a letter to Grohe—"A wonder, a wonder, an unheard-of wonder has happened! The long-wished-for opera-text has at last been found. It lies quite ready before me, and now I burn with desire to set about the music for it."

What had happened to bring about this happy change in the situation is made clear by turning to the recital of Frau Mayreder. Five years had elapsed since her attempt to supply him with a libretto had had so discouraging a result. At last the idea of "Der Dreispitz," suggested to him, as we have seen, by Schaumann, put him in mind of the earlier libretto. Frau Mayreder thinks that it was under the influence of Nietzsche, whom he was reading about this time, that the southern atmosphere of Alarcon's novel, with its heart-easing laughter and its exhilarating sunshine, now made so strong an appeal to him. He remembered the old text, and asked for it in order to look through it again. The result was the conviction that here was the subject he wanted. Frau Mayreder tells us that she never learned very much as to the reason for this radical change in his views; Wolf never spoke to her on the subject, and she noticed that he was pained at any

reminiscence of his previous refusal of the libretto. He now, indeed, went from the extreme of repugnance to the extreme of approbation. Frau Mayreder had intended her first text only as a rough sketch, to serve as a basis for conference with the composer; Wolf was now willing to accept it as the finished work, without criticising or finding fault with it. Formerly he had disliked the trochaic verse in which it was written; now, when Frau Mayreder showed him a new version of part of the text in iambic metre, he preferred the earlier form. Even the suggestions made by Frau Mayreder for the improvement of the text were either rejected by him or accepted unwillingly. She wrote to him proposing to shorten materially the second half of the last Act. He wrote back: "Who the devil has put this giant-flea in your ear, to go about shortening the fourth Act? . . . I have looked closely at the part once more, and my feeling, in which I confide as firmly as a rock, tells me that it is right just as it is and cannot and may not be otherwise." "This fourth Act," he writes a fortnight later, "is my declared favourite; hidden away in it are so many jewels of all kinds that they will make the mouth of the epicure water. I could not resist giving myself the pleasure to-day of playing through the whole Act, and, ridiculous as it may seem, I was ravished and transported by it. . . . The orchestration of this dear and lovely fourth Act will be a source of the purest happiness to me, while the composition of the other three was only vexation and drudgery."

Sometimes Wolf himself asked for slight alterations, mostly of the nature of elongations of the lyrical passages in order to give freer play to the musical development. He always, says Frau Mayreder, accepted gratefully, even with delight, what she brought him on occasions like

these. "He found each line 'admirable,' and so scrupulously did he respect the words that he expressly indicated every trifling alteration he had made, and justified it by the demands of the musical declamation. Never has a composer treated his librettist more considerately than the Hugo Wolf who was so feared and decried on account of his rough wilfulness. He did not demand of the text that it should stretch and strain itself to fit the music; he spun the music out of the inner necessity that the text wrought in him; it was impossible for him to want to dislocate the action in order to get musical effect." It was only when the inspiration was on him, and he was compelled to hold it back in mid-flood while his librettist was making some desired expansion of the text, that he would become impatient. "Quick, quick," he would write to her; "quick, for God's sake,—or, as the Corregidor says, for the sake of the nails of Christ! Quick."

Meanwhile he was anxious to have the opinion of his most trusted friends as to the worth of the libretto. On 3rd March 1895 he sent it to Faisst, asking him to forward it, after reading it, to Hermann Zumpe, the Kapellmeister at Stuttgart, who had shown an interest in the new work. Zumpe in turn was to send the manuscript to Kauffmann. As soon as he actually began the composition of the opera the old facility came back to him, and he poured the music out at white heat, with a kind of delirious joy in his own profusion. On the 1st May he writes to Kauffmann that the first two Acts, as far as the scene with the Corregidor, are quite complete, in a vocal score that is ready for the printer, "for it is my way to put it all on paper at once in its complete form. Since the 1st April I have been in Perchtoldsdorf, where in their own time the Mörike songs and the Spanish song-

book were born. In this short space of time I have succeeded in doing the incredible. Rejoice with me. I work like a madman from six o'clock in the morning, without a break, until twilight comes. Imagine my felicity! Last Sunday I invited an illustrious company, including Frau Mayreder, the authoress of the text-book, to Perchtoldsdorf, and played and sang to them the music of *Der Corregidor* (that is to be the name of the opera). The effect on the hearers, in spite of the fact that they were almost all only amateurs, was overpowering. What will the cognoscenti say about it? The music to *Der Corregidor* puts indeed everything in the shade that has so far come from my pen. It is above all more plastic and of a stupendous simplicity and clearness. But this cannot be described; it must be heard. I hope to finish the composition during the next two months. Then for the orchestration, and in winter the performance must be managed; that is my plan. This morning early I am already working at the first scene, in which the Corregidor appears. The fandango is already written out. Fancies and ideas throng in upon me in such abundance that I can scarcely note them down fast enough. In short, it goes splendidly."

He was particularly pleased at the interest Zumpe showed in the new work, but in a lettter to Faisst of the 14th May 1895 he says that it is at Vienna, not Stuttgart, that the opera is to "receive its baptism of fire." He tells Faisst, for his own special benefit, that the bass has an exceptional lot of work to do in the opera; "Tio Lukas is a baritone, and Tonuelo and the Alkalde are basses of the blackest colour, so that you will be able to sing half of the opera."

On the 16th May he went to Schloss Matzen, near

Brixlegg, the seat of his friend Baron Lipperheide, who had with difficulty persuaded the composer to accept a small annuity. In order that Wolf might work away at the opera without interruption, the Baron had placed at his disposal a huntsman's house in the park, where he was to be entirely alone. He had had to leave Perchtoldsdorf because the proprietors of the house there wanted to occupy it again; and the Baron's invitation to Matzen had been accepted only on the express condition that Wolf's personal freedom was to be in no way interfered with. The little house, which seems to have been a very delightful one, stood on a gently sloping hill in the middle of the park. There was a good piano in his workroom. "I live completely isolated from everyone," he writes to Kauffmann; "there is not even a servant living in the cottage. A more beautiful solitude could not be imagined even by the wildest fancy. No human beings disturb me here; only the finches and the crickets, while now and then the woodpeckers, with their diabolical shrieks, bring me out of my placid frame of mind. A pair of gunshots, I hope, will have the desired effect, and rid me of these ill-favoured companions. Against the crickets, to be sure, one must act more energetically; but unfortunately only fire is any use, and I don't as yet feel any call to become an incendiary."

His letters to Frau Mayreder show that there were occasional knots in the music that it cost him extraordinary trouble to unravel. "Your delightful letter," he wrote to her once, "reached me just as I was finishing the great scene of Tio Lukas. I write you therefore in a state of the greatest excitement, which you will understand, and which must be the excuse for these lines and also the shaky handwriting. I am happy that I have at last

got this formidable part behind me! You really have no idea what anguish of soul I have suffered lately. For some days I went about like a man in despair, cursing myself and music-composing and the opera and the whole world. For three days I vainly tortured my poor brain to find the right musical expression for the passage 'Wenn es Gott gefallen hätte, mich durch schlimmen Schein zu prufen.' I seemed to be stupid. Every attempt miscarried. Superstitious as I am, I interpreted the passage in question in Lukas's monologue as applying to my own case, as if all the joy of creation existed only in order to make the vanity of it all the more evident to me by the sudden cessation of it; for what could I have done with an opera half finished? . . . To-day I am so joyous, sanguine, intoxicated with the future, that I could embrace the whole world. But what a scene it has become! When I played through it to-day, I was so shaken by it that I had to stop for terror and agitation."

This was on the 8th June. Six weeks later he writes to Frau Mayreder in the same strain: "The working-out of the final chorus — 'Guten Morgen, edle Donna' — has caused me unspeakable difficulty. I began to doubt, indeed, whether I could accomplish a proper ending, and had familiarised myself with the idea of letting the work finish with the last words of Mercedes, even at the cost of giving up the beautiful final effect. However, my artistic conscience revolted strongly against such faint-heartedness, and by the expenditure of my last strength, in truth in a spirit of desperation, I forced myself to the difficult task and worked uninterruptedly for a week at the design; and behold! it succeeded and succeeded splendidly."

The work was finished on the 9th July; he immediately

THE HUNTSMAN'S COTTAGE IN THE PARK AT SCHLOSS MATZEN, WHERE MOST OF "DER CORREGIDOR" WAS WRITTEN

despatched a telegram—"finis coronat opus"—to Frau Mayreder, and sent short letters to Grohe, Kauffmann, and Faisst announcing the glad fact. He had written the opera, by an effort that was almost superhuman in its sustained intensity, in three months and nine days. He had never ceased work upon it for a day except for his journey from Perchtoldsdorf to Matzen and a flying excursion to Achensee with Baron Lipperheide in June. He had already made arrangements to have his manuscript copied, since the vocal score was to be printed in the autumn. As he did not wish to run the risk of losing the original manuscript—for besides this he had nothing more than a few meagre sketches of the work—he asked his friend Faisst to find for him, through Zumpe, a reliable copyist in Stuttgart, who was to have a seat in Faisst's office and there copy the manuscript sheet by sheet as it was given him, but was on no account to take any of it home. He was to refrain from making any pencil marks on the manuscript, and he was to be careful not to approach it with unwashed hands—an amusing sidelight on the normal ways of the German music-copyist. Faisst made the desired arrangements for him, though the copying did not proceed so quickly as Wolf desired. He had given Faisst the second, third and fourth Acts, retaining the first in order to score it. So rapidly did he do this that he had finished the first Act before the vocal score of the second had been copied, and he was consequently brought to an unwilling pause.

He began the orchestration on the 19th July,—a labour that occupied him until the 17th December. The Baron left Matzen at the end of July, so that Wolf found himself absolutely without hindrance in his work. He now worked

in the castle, where there was a good Bechstein piano, feeling himself less constrained there than in the little huntsman's house. About the middle of August, it appears from a letter to Faisst, the affair of the Stuttgart copyist came to a sad end. Wolf received his manuscript back and sent it to Dr. Potpeschnigg in Graz to have arrangements made there for its completion. Potpeschnigg found a veritable jewel of a copyist; he charged so little for his work that Potpeschnigg, who insisted on relieving Wolf of this expense, voluntarily increased the amount by fifty per cent.

When the Baron returned, in September, Wolf found his opportunities for work considerably curtailed. The castle was filled with guests, with most of whom Wolf's reserved habits and sensitive disposition made it hard for him to be at ease. "I have done all that was humanly possible," he wrote to Frau Mayreder, "to accommodate myself to this company; but it is no use; there is lacking all contact between these people and myself. My appetite at the general dinner often vanishes so completely that I scarcely touch a single dish, and have to make shift afterwards in my huntsman's house with bread-and-butter so as not to die of hunger." When he could be alone, he worked with his usual furious, exhausting concentration. "From early morning till late in the night," he wrote to Frau Mayreder on the 5th October, "I sit continuously at my writing-table, and torment my brain at the difficult passages which pursue me, frequently even in my dreams. With my crazy fashion of always adding new counterpoints, the working-out in many cases takes the form of an impossibility, and yet—with the needful expenditure of industry and patience even the impossible is done at last. But the victories are dearly bought. I must accustom

myself to rather more modest intentions, or else I shall not finish the score this year."

The scoring of *Der Corregidor* was completed on the 17th December, and a few days afterwards he returned to Vienna, to take up his abode in the house of Karl Mayreder, the husband of his librettist. He had, as we have seen, hoped that the opera would be first performed in Vienna, and to that end had sounded Wilhelm Jahn, the director of the Vienna opera, in the autumn of 1895. A production there, however, was found to be impossible just then; and negotiations with Berlin and Prague were no more successful. So Wolf yielded to the solicitations of some of his Swabian friends, and allowed the work to be secured for the Mannheim theatre. Heckel, of Mannheim, undertook to bring out the vocal score,[1] and Wolf spent part of the three months in which he stayed at Mayreder's house in the correction of the proofs. The change from Schloss Matzen to the climate of Vienna in winter had been bad for him. He caught one cold after another, and was again troubled with insomnia; no doubt the prolonged strain of the summer's work was now beginning to tell on him. In March a mysterious letter reached him from Stuttgart containing a bank draft for 1000 marks. His generous friends were at this time behaving with the utmost kindness and delicacy towards him; thanks to them he was soon to be enabled to remove into new rooms of his own. Towards

[1] He was to publish it on commission, the work remaining the composer's property; he was also to bring out the songs on the same terms. For some time Wolf had been dissatisfied with Schott. In his letter to Frau Mayreder of 5th October he tells her, with bitter humour, that he has just received Schotts' statement of his account with them. The result, he says, is "magnificent"; in five years he has made 86 marks 35 pfennigs (a little over £4). "To heighten the tragi-comedy of the case, Schott writes me that he really did not expect such a *happy* result."

the end of March he left the Mayreders and went back to his old quarters in Perchtoldsdorf. Here a new fit of inspiration came upon him. He took up the *Italienisches Liederbuch* that had been laid aside nearly five years before, and was soon in the old felicitous mood when song after song flowed uninterruptedly from his pen. Between the 25th March and 13th April 1896, he tells Faisst, twelve songs were written; most of them are for a low voice, so that Faisst can sing them. Another ten were written by the 26th April, making in all twenty-two —the same number as the first volume contained. Here he intended to stop; but by the 30th of the month he had written two more songs, and the second volume of the *Italienisches Liederbuch* accordingly contains twenty-four.

He was induced, though with difficulty, to attend the rehearsals of *Der Corregidor* at Mannheim. Here he was thoroughly unhappy. There were mistakes in the orchestral parts, the usual troubles with the singers arose,[1] and he conducted some of the sectional orchestral rehearsals so awkwardly that the players, it is said, began to doubt whether it was really he who had written and scored the work. He himself had mostly ears only for the music, and was curiously indifferent to the theatrical side of the performance; when he was asked what he thought of a certain change that had been made in the stage setting it was discovered that he had never noticed it. Difficulty after difficulty cropped up, and it took all the tact and patience of Grohe and Heckel to smooth

[1] The piano score was not printed until a little while before the performance, and the singers had consequently to learn their parts from manuscript copies. This in itself gave them an unnecessary amount of trouble, while Wolf's usual nervous irritation when anything went wrong at rehearsal was not calculated to draw the singers nearer to him. It is significant that at the supper which followed the first performance only one of them was present.

things over at times. The performance was first postponed from the 24th to the 31st May, and finally to the 7th June.

Nothing would induce Wolf either to sit in the Intendant's box or to wear a coat suitable to the solemnity of the occasion. He donned his usual light summer suit and sat in the second gallery with Dr. Potpeschnigg, where he could see and hear without being seen or disturbed. The conductor was Hugo Röhr, and the cast as follows:—

Tio Lucas: Kromer.
The Corregidor: Hans Rüdiger.
Frasquita: A Beginner, whose name is not given.
The Corregidor's Wife: Anna Sorger.
Repela: Marx.
Tonuelo: Hildebrandt.

Frau Mayreder and other friends had come to Mannheim for the performance. At the end of the second Act Frau Mayreder made her way up to the second tier and spoke to Wolf, who was lost in reverie; he started up at the sight of his poetess, and without speaking a word fell upon her neck with tears of gratitude in his eyes. The performance was a complete success. Wolf was called for by the audience, and after much persuasion on the part of his friends he stepped upon the stage at the end of the third Act. He refused, however, to accept any of the wreaths except that of the Mannheim Wagner-Verein. He received an honorarium of 200 marks (£10) for the work. He does not seem to have given much thought to this until he reached Traunkirchen some days after. So far as he could remember, he had put the money in a drawer in the writing-table in his room at Mannheim; he telegraphed to the place, but the money was gone, and was never recovered. A friend wished to make the amount good to him, but Wolf refused to accept it.

Only one other performance of the opera was given, the first having taken place near the end of the season; and as Röhr, the conductor, soon afterwards removed to Munich, and one or two of the singers also left Mannheim, it was all the more difficult to take up the work again. It was never again performed in Wolf's lifetime.

CHAPTER VII

ILLNESS AND DEATH

WOLF returned to Vienna towards the end of June, and shortly afterwards took possession of the new home in the Schwindgasse that the generosity of his friends had provided for him. It was the first time he had had a home of his own, and he was greatly pleased with it. His letters go with the most charming naïveté into all kinds of details as to the number and size and arrangement of the rooms. The place was fairly quiet, his work-room and sitting-room looking upon a small garden; his friend Werner lived in the same street, and they could talk to each other across the courtyard from their respective windows. The Mayreders lived only some five hundred yards away. "How grateful I am for this blessing," he writes to Faisst on the 11th July, "only those can estimate who, like myself, have for half a human life led a nomadic existence." Each of his friends gave a contribution to the furnishing,—Dr. Potpeschnigg a fine writing-table which had once belonged to his grandfather the poet Holtei, Frau Köchert a splendid Persian carpet and other gifts, Frau Mayreder a divan and some pictures for his study. "But you, my honest Faischtling,"[1] he writes in deep gratitude to Faisst, "you

[1] Wolf was fond of addressing his friends in affectionate diminutives, of which he had a great store at his command.

laid the foundation for all these delightful things, for without your secret management I should to-day be in the streets, instead of being well provided for, on the fourth storey, to which a true heaven's-ladder leads up. Let me kiss and embrace you, dear good man, friend, brother and companion. I can only exclaim with Florestan—'you will have your reward in a better world.'"

In August he went to Schloss Matzen again, leaving there on the 16th for Graz with Dr. Potpeschnigg. Here he began to collate the new orchestral parts of *Der Corregidor* with the full score. Later on he subjected the opera itself to a careful revision, not only changing many of the marks of expression and lightening the instrumentation here and there, but altering the music slightly at one or two points. The Hanover opera authorities approached him during his stay at Graz with regard to a performance of the work, but nothing came of the negotiations. On the 3rd September he was back in Vienna; a few days afterwards he was deeply distressed to hear of the death of Baroness von Lipperheide, who, as he said, had been a second mother to him. In October he was again much affected by the death of Bruckner. About this time he finished the music to Robert Reinick's "Morgenlied," which had been begun some time before, though the work of collating the parts of *Der Corregidor* had prevented him from finishing it. His curiously fastidious taste deciding that the term "song" was inapplicable either to the form or the contents of the poem, he altered the title of his setting of it to *Morgenstimmung*. It was his intention to bring out two other songs to words by Reinick,—the *Gesellenlied* and the *Skolie*, composed in 1888 and 1889 respectively.

A recital of his songs that had been planned for Vienna did not take place; but on the 30th November one was

given in Berlin at which the indefatigable Faisst sang the *Prometheus*. Wolf had meanwhile been trying to induce the Vienna opera house to take up *Der Corregidor*. In December he had an interview with Fuchs, the Hofkapellmeister, to whom he played the work. Fuchs wanted him to remodel the fourth Act, and the negotiations apparently did not go much further, though shortly afterwards Wolf altered this Act somewhat. He was no more successful with the Weimar authorities than with those of Vienna.

On the 22nd February the postponed song-recital was given in Vienna with the greatest success, artistic and pecuniary. The singers were Ferdinand Jäger and Fräulein Chotek,—the latter taking the place of Fräulein Bosetti, whom Wolf had first desired to engage. The *Skolie* was encored. The *Morgenstimmung* was so enthusiastically applauded that Wolf broke his general rule and appeared and bowed,—feeling, he said afterwards, that he ought to thank an audience that showed such quick appreciation of so difficult a new song. On the 12th March the Graz Wagner-Verein gave a concert exclusively devoted to his works. The next day—his birthday—he played to a gathering of his friends the revised version of *Der Corregidor*.[1] He had now great hopes of seeing this produced in Vienna. In the summer of 1897 Mahler had been appointed chief musical director of the Opera; and Wolf, as his letters show, found the performances more interesting than they had been under the old *régime*. He now goes frequently to the opera, he writes to Faisst, "it being possible, since Mahler's appearance at the conductor's desk, for people to venture again into those unhallowed halls."[2] Mahler showed such

[1] Michael Haberlandt, who was present, has given a graphic picture of the occasion in his "Gedanken und Erinnerungen."

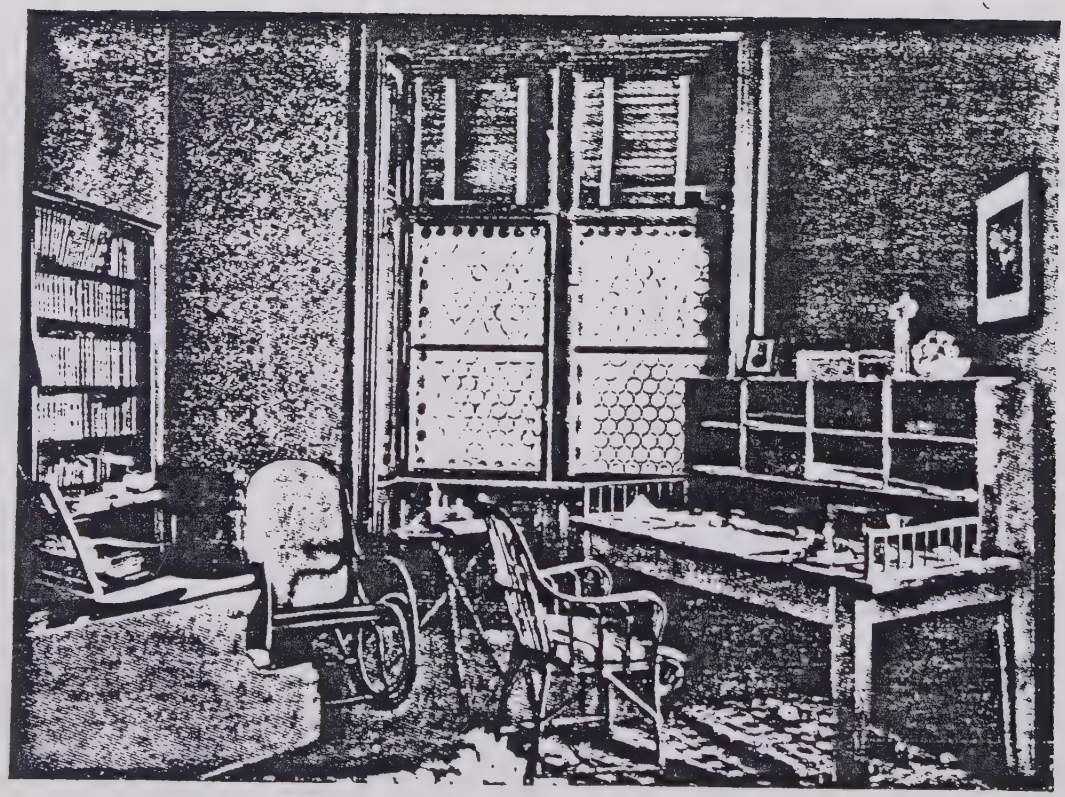
[2] He writes to the same effect on the 1st September 1897 to Paul Müller:

a liking for *Der Corregidor* that Wolf counted on an early performance of the opera. It would certainly be produced in the coming season, he wrote to his mother on the 4th June 1897. "I have to-day received the definite assurance of the new Kapellmeister Mahler (an old friend of mine). He is now all-powerful at the Vienna opera. He himself will rehearse and conduct my work; this will be all the more agreeable to me as Mahler is more than any other man fitted to enter into my intentions." The performance was practically settled upon for January or February 1898. For reasons not perfectly understood, however, the work was put aside, Rubinstein's "Demon" being given in its place.

In March 1897 he had begun work upon a new poet, Michelangelo, three of whose sonnets he set to music. Paul Müller had sent him, the previous Christmas, a fine edition of Walter Tornow's translation of the poems. He planned a collection of at least six of these. His settings, he wrote to Faisst on the 23rd March, "are really antique, so far as one can be so in modern music. . . . I work without intermission like a steam-engine." These are the last songs that came from his pen. From another letter it appears that the fourth of the set was actually begun, but Wolf was dissatisfied with it, and only three have been published.

At this time his whole prospects looked brighter than they had ever done. In May 1897 someone—Wolf never knew who it was—settled on him a small annuity of 200 gulden (about £17). The generous donor was a

"We recently had the complete tetralogy of 'The Ring of the Nibelung,' and for the most part without cuts;—a very rare thing for Vienna. The Vienna performances of Wagner's works will soon rank as models. We have to thank Mahler for it all, who has put an absolute end to the old jog-trot routine."



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Mannheim singer, Anna Reiss. Appreciation of his work, too, seemed to be coming at last. In a letter to his old mother of the 4th June 1897 he says that he foresees a rosy future for himself, and hopes that she will live to see the dawn of it. In the previous April his friends had founded the Vienna Hugo Wolf-Verein—an association the main object of which was to spread the recognition of his music, and to relieve the composer of any spade-work in connection with it. He tells his mother, in the letter already quoted from, that the associates already number more than one hundred. The president was Dr. Michael Haberlandt, Custos of the Natural History Museum and a lecturer at the Vienna University—one of the later friends of Wolf, but yielding to none of the others in energy and enthusiasm. The founding of the Verein was formally celebrated on the 22nd April. Wolf was not present, but he met his friends afterwards over a glass of beer. Knowing his detestation of anything in the nature of hero-worship,[1] Haberlandt, in proposing the toast of the new society, had to omit all mention of the name of it; the grim humour of the situation at last seized upon Wolf, and he laughed till the tears ran down his face.[2]

Besides the Michelangelo songs, the spring of 1897 saw him engaged on a large new work—his second opera, *Manuel Venegas*.[3] As we have seen, the possibility of an

[1] In one of his letters to Paul Müller, Wolf characteristically begs him not to address him any more as "Meister."

[2] The Verein gave twenty-six concerts of Wolf's works. It looked after the stricken composer during his illness, and attended to the business side of the publication of his music. It was dissolved early in 1906, its work having been accomplished.

[3] In the early part of 1896 Paul Müller had suggested Merimée's 'Colomba" to him as a likely subject for an opera. Wolf's reply was: "I read it fifteen years ago. It is uncomposable; blood-revenge is not an

opera on this novel of Alarcon occurred to him in 1892, but at that time he put the idea aside. It came up again in 1897. He applied to Frau Mayreder for a libretto, which she prepared rather against her will, feeling, for one thing, that it would be better for Wolf not to work at a second opera on a Spanish subject. He was greatly pleased with the libretto at first, but the friends to whom he showed it were less enthusiastic, and gradually succeeded in bringing him round to their view of the inadequacy of it for stage effect. It was Haberlandt who gave the finishing blow to the text. Wolf was greatly distressed at first, no doubt feeling that there lay before him another long period of anxious search for a libretto, and another epoch of musical sterility. Haberlandt, however, suggested that a good text might be put together by his friend and colleague Dr. Moritz Hoernes. He introduced Hoernes to Wolf; the poet sketched out the general plan of the action as he conceived it, and the composer was delighted. Some weeks afterwards Haberlandt brought him the completed poem. Wolf read it in silence, and was so deeply affected by it that the tears ran down his pale and wasted cheeks. Hoernes made, at his suggestion, one or two slight alterations that would give freer scope to the composer's need for purely musical development. When the final text reached him at the beginning of July 1897, he was completely satisfied with it; Shakespeare himself, he told Grohe in his glee, could not have made a better thing of the novel for him.

He made a short excursion to Traunkirchen; then,

adequate theme for us Hyperboreans. . . . I also know the music to 'Colomba' [by our own esteemed compatriot Sir Alexander Mackenzie], dreadful, dry stuff. We Viennese say of the Scottish composer, who is sometimes served up to us in the concert-room, 'ma kennt Sie,' and then pay our obedient respects."

on his return to Vienna, he began work upon the music of *Manuel Venegas* with his usual feverish and unresting ardour. Every physical discomfort was forgotten, every social observance put aside; visits were neither paid nor received, and correspondence was not answered.

But those who knew him best and had most opportunities for observing him closely were beginning to be anxious about him. Already there had been occasional slight signs of unusual strangeness in his manner. In the preceding April Humperdinck—to whom there is no doubt Wolf was sincerely attached—had paid him a visit on his way to Pesth, where he was to conduct "Hänsel and Gretel." The two composers and Frau Humperdinck, after visiting the museum in the morning, went to take some refreshment. Wolf suddenly exhibited an inexplicable aversion to Frau Humperdinck. He shifted his seat several times, giving as his reason that he did not wish to be seen by any of his friends; he was irritable and ill-humoured. In the afternoon Wolf began to play *Der Corregidor* to Humperdinck, his wife, and Richard Wallaschek, the well-known author of "Primitive Music." He played on for about two hours, Humperdinck being greatly delighted with the work. After hearing the second Act he and his wife had to leave, having another appointment in the evening. Promising to play the remaining two Acts to them on their return from Pesth, Wolf accompanied his guests to their carriage, closed the door of it abruptly, and ran off without a word of farewell. When Humperdinck returned from Pesth, Wolf was not in Vienna, and the pair never met again. In a letter to Kauffmann, the day after this episode, Wolf writes: "We had scarcely gone through more than a third of the opera when his complete lack of interest in it greatly vexed me.

Now I find it on the one hand quite comprehensible that a composer who has enriched the répertoire of all the barrel-organs should have no ear for the better music of another man; but on the other hand it is sad indeed when rambling music-makers of this kind are trumpeted to the world as the ordained successors of Wagner" . . . and so on in the same style. One feels only pity at the outburst; the man's mind was clearly in an abnormal state of irritation and suspicion.

There were further signs of nervous derangement while he was working at *Manuel Venegas*. His weakened physical system was now hardly equal to the strain of his intense thinking; and for the first time in his life he had recourse to wine to stimulate him during composition when he felt his bodily forces ebbing. On the rare occasions when he called upon his friends they were struck by the strange uneasiness and excitability of his manner. On the 15th September Haberlandt received a flying note from him saying that on the previous day he had written the whole of Manuel's monologue at one sitting in spite of various interruptions, and bidding Haberlandt to call all the faithful to the standard on the next Sunday, when he would play them as much as he had written of the new opera.[1] He followed this up with a couple of sheets of music paper on which he had jotted down the theme of Manuel's love for Soledad and part of a duet; across the first sheet, interlined with the music, he had written "Piping hot! Just out of the pan! Am beside myself! Sell me up! Am happy! Raving!" Haberlandt says he felt a thrill of terror go through him as he read the words, but tried to reassure himself with the reflection

[1] He wrote a postcard to his friend Bockmayer in the same terms. The handwriting of this was noticeably deranged.

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that when Wolf was composing he always seemed possessed with a demon that made him unlike a normal man. But his mind was not easy, and at the risk of annoying Wolf by adding another to the visits which the composer so much resented at that time, he called at his rooms. Wolf opened the door himself, and Haberlandt was startled by the wildness of his look. Wolf stared blankly at Haberlandt as he made an apology for disturbing him; then he took him into the study and immediately began to talk excitedly and confusedly about his new work. Haberlandt was painfully affected, and besought him to take a rest or to go away for a time in order to recover his health; but Wolf assured him that he had never felt better and had never written anything finer. He sat down at the piano and played and sang the *Manuel Venegas* fragment with a most impressive look of felicity upon his face. His tears fell upon the piano, and he wiped them from the keys with his sleeve, like a child. The music seemed to soothe him, and Haberlandt went away, concerned for him but not immediately anxious, and with a promise that on the following Sunday Wolf would visit him in the country and, if he chose, bring his composition with him. A day or so afterwards, dining with a couple of friends—Foll and Hellmer—at a restaurant, Wolf assured them that he was now director of the Vienna opera and would make Foll a chorus master. They took it to be a grim joke of his, and thought no more about it; the real significance of the remark only became clear to them some days later.

Bockmayer had asked Wolf to come on the Sunday, the 19th September 1897, to his house in Mödling, outside Vienna, and had invited some twenty other people to hear the composer play as much as had been written of

his new work. The meeting was for the afternoon. Early in the morning Wolf went to Edmund Hellmer's home in Perchtoldsdorf, which he had never entered before; encountering Hellmer's mother, he represented himself to her as the director of the Vienna opera. He recited a speech he had composed to the officials of the opera, in which he finally dismissed the director. Then he hurried Hellmer off to Haberlandt's house, and forced them both, in spite of their protests, to go to Mauer, where the opera singer Winckelmann lived; he insisted that Winckelmann was to go at once to Bockmayer's with him to sing the music of *Manuel Venegas*. He burst into Winckelmann's house with the query, "Do you know who your new director is? I am! I have just been with the Prince and have arranged everything with him." For the moment Winckelmann was inclined to believe him, and was startled to hear what Wolf desired of him. Haberlandt, however, intimated by signs that something was wrong, and Winckelmann went away on the pretext that he had been called to the telephone. The friends managed to get Wolf out of the house, but he was furious with the singer; if he did not come to Bockmayer's in the afternoon, he said, he would dismiss him.

Wolf's friends took him back to Perchtoldsdorf, where he had something to eat in Haberlandt's house, after which he slept a couple of hours. He had been awake since three o'clock that morning, had had no food for twenty-four hours, and was quite exhausted. Meanwhile the other friends were told of what had occurred. Wolf's sleep did not, as Haberlandt had hoped, restore him to his normal state of mind; as soon as he awoke he was again possessed by the idea that he was director of the Vienna opera. Still no one yet suspected the real gravity

of the situation. Bockmayer and the others agreed that it would be better to carry out the original plan for the assembly at his house, since it was feared that a postponement of this would irritate Wolf still further. To Bockmayer's they accordingly went about five o'clock. Here Wolf's conduct was stranger than ever,—he insisted, for instance, on one lady leaving the room because he felt that she was unsympathetic towards him. Yet when he sat down and played and sang through the *Manuel Venegas* music it was all done with perfect clearness and self-command; some of the passages he repeated and explained. The moment he rose from the piano all lucidity vanished, and the crazed side of the poor brain became the master again. He once more maintained that he was the director of the opera, and that he would dismiss Mahler, Winckelmann and others; then he began to relate atrocious stories of his house-porter.

There could now be no doubt of the state of Wolf's mind. Among Bockmayer's guests, as it happened, there was a physician of repute, who declared it to be imperative that Wolf should be placed in an institution without delay. They telephoned to Vienna, but got the reply that no inmate could be received in the asylum at night. Meanwhile Wolf had become much calmer; he seated himself at the piano and played the overture to "Die Meistersinger," though his memory failed him towards the end and he had to stop. He was taken into the dining-room, where he ate and drank well. Then he talked quite lucidly about various episodes of his life, though every now and then there were renewals of his former aberration. At eleven o'clock Foll and Bockmayer took him back to Vienna. He was in a good mood all the time; but when they reached his house in the Schwindgasse he suddenly

attacked the concierge. The latter, of course, not understanding the situation, turned on him fiercely; and a terrible scene ensued, Foll and Bockmayer both being in peril of their own lives in the attempt to separate the men. At last they got Wolf to his room; he gradually became more composed, ate some fruit, and about two o'clock in the morning went to sleep.

The next day he put on black clothes, saying he had to go to the Hofmeister and sign the agreement regarding the opera appointment. Haberlandt, Werner and a physician humoured him in the idea, went out with him, and quietly took him to the medical establishment of Dr. Svetlin. This was on the 20th September 1897. Then his friends lost sight of him, the most conflicting reports as to his condition reaching them now and then.

It was at one time rumoured that he was paralysed, and at the most could not live more than a year. The latter diagnosis proved incorrect, but the tendency to paralysis became clearer as time went on.[1] The mental disease took one of its most frequent forms,—Wolf had delusions in which he believed himself to be various great personages. At times he thought he was director of the establishment, and meant to take Nietzsche and heal him; at other times he thought he was Jupiter and could control the weather. It makes piteous reading, but the probability is that he was not unhappy in these delusions, and that he suffered less at this time, both physically and mentally, than in any of the later stages of his disease.

[1] Dr. Potpeschnigg, it seems, had already suspected something of the kind. About a year before, when Wolf was staying with him in Graz, some cinders from a locomotive entered Wolf's eye. Potpeschnigg took him to a specialist, who noticed the insensitiveness and rigidity of the pupils. He communicated the fact to Potpeschnigg, who, to his great sorrow, recognised in it one of the signs of brain disease.

He gradually improved, but with returning health felt a pathetic shyness with regard to the old friends to whom his first derangement had been disclosed. He seemed, as time went on, to be recovering completely, and before long was able to work quite collectedly at music. He scored a chorus from *Manuel Venegas* and two of his Spanish songs—*Wer sein holdes Lieb verloren* and *Wenn du zu den Blumen gehst*,—turned the *Morgenstimmung* into a *Morgenhymnus* for chorus and orchestra, took up the *Italienische Serenade* again, and rewrote part of the *Penthesilea*,—afterwards burning the last-named, however. He read Kleist continually, and thought of another opera on the subject of the "Prinz von Homburg."

On the 24th January 1898 he was discharged from the establishment. He now conceived a dread of Vienna, and indeed of Austria, and wished to go anywhere else to live—Italy or Switzerland for preference. For three days he stayed with Frau Köchert and Dr. Werner; then he went with Werner to Graz. After a day's pause there, he went on a tour with Potpeschnigg in southern Styria. Once he played to his companion the new version of *Penthesilea*. When he came to the passage he had added during his illness he paused and reflected for a moment, then, angry at the poverty of it, tore the page out and was with difficulty persuaded by Potpeschnigg not to burn it there and then.

For a little time in February he wandered about with his sister, visiting Trieste, Pirano, Lussinpiccolo, Abbazia and other places. He was still sadly out of tune, and nothing that man or nature could do could give him any joy in life. To Faisst he wrote on the 2nd February that he had no mind for work, and thought he would never write another note. Music-making of any kind was odious

to him; even his unfinished opera now pleased him so little that he felt no desire to go on with it. "Greet for me," he concluded, "your lovely, delightful Swabian country, and take a warm embrace from your worn-out and dismantled Hugo Wolf." On the 5th he wrote to Haberlandt in the same gloomy strain: "Thanks for your friendly lines, but do not ask for a letter from me. The least mental occupation wearies me. I believe it is all over with me. I do not read, do not make music, do not think; in a word, I vegetate. This is a true picture of my inner being." There was a proposal from the Marquis della Valle that he should visit Pallanza, but the invitation was for April. On the 12th February he writes to Faisst, wearily asking if it cannot be arranged for him to go to Pallanza at once; any little room where he can be quiet will do for him, for he is tired of wandering about. He begs his friend to forgive him for the brevity of his letter, for nothing now repels him so much as the idea of correspondence; he can scarcely bring himself to write a single page.

Nowhere could he find rest or happiness. Suddenly abandoning his Italian tour he paid a flying visit to his home in Windischgraz. Thence he went to Salzburg, thought of settling there, changed his mind again, and on the 8th of March was back in Vienna, hoping, he wrote to Grohe, that he would be able to resume work at *Manuel Venegas*. In May, he tells Faisst, he means to go to live in Hietzing, outside the city, where he will be near the Schönbrunn park. He is fatigued after all his wanderings, but on the whole feels better. He at first put up at a small hotel in Vienna; then lodgings were found for him in the Mühlgasse, his financial needs both now and later being looked after by the Vienna Hugo Wolf-Verein, aided by some of his old friends. In his new quarters he

began to feel his interest in music reviving; he improved the ending of the *Vaterland* and revised the Eichendorff songs, rejecting the *Erwartung*, *Die Nacht* and *Das Waldmädchen* from the new volume-edition; *Manuel Venegas*, however, he still could not bring himself to touch, though he discussed the libretto with Dr. Hoernes. His health probably improved a little about this time. His appetite, he writes to Faisst on the 21st April, is excellent. He contradicts the report that he is moody and unsociable; it simply means that he has resolved to keep quietly to himself, a course which his friends have misinterpreted. The justification itself seems a confession; he was undoubtedly a changed man.

On the 24th May he went with the Köcherts to Traunkirchen. He gave himself up entirely to the quest of health, doing no work beyond the correction of the proofs of the three Michelangelo songs; the intention of orchestrating them was never carried out. For a time he seemed to improve; he looked ahead and planned to spend the winter near Gmunden. In October, however, he became decidedly worse. One day he threw himself into the Traunsee, intending to drown himself; but the coldness of the water effected a revulsion of feeling and he swam mechanically back to the shore. He was now conscious of the coming doom and was resigned to it. For a time the Köcherts hoped to nurse him in their own house; but before long signs of paralytic cramp were evident, and now it was the poor stricken soul himself who asked to be taken into an institution, only begging pathetically that it might not be Dr. Svetlin's. A telegram was sent to Haberlandt, who made the needful arrangements with the Lower Austrian asylum in Vienna. Two attendants were sent down, and Wolf went quietly with them into his

living tomb. He was destined still to live on for more than four years, but he never again entered the outer world as a free man.

His condition varied from time to time. In the spring of 1899 he was rather better; he joined in the games of the other inmates, read a little, and sometimes received visits. All that was possible was done to make his bed of pain a little lighter. Besides the contributions of the Wolf-Verein and of other institutions the Austrian Emperor made a yearly grant of 1200 kronen, which was paid regularly until the composer's death. A piano was placed in his room; it happened that one of the officials of the asylum was himself a musician of modern tendencies who knew and admired Wolf's work, and the two often played Bruckner's and other works as piano duets. Now and then he was allowed to go to Perchtoldsdorf and other places with an attendant, but his remarks on everything he saw indicated how disturbed his brain had become; he thought that well-known buildings and scenes had been changed by enchantment, and changed for the worse. Occasionally he forgot his own identity. On the whole he was declining steadily, both his memory and his powers of perception growing gradually weaker. One day when Potpeschnigg visited him, at the end of 1899, he found Wolf enclosed in a kind of lattice-bed like a cage. Wolf recognised his friend's voice before he entered the room, and when he saw him clasped his hands and begged Potpeschnigg to release him. The attendants let him out for a time; a pitiful conversation ensued and a no less pitiful parting, Wolf urging his friend to go quickly lest they should imprison him too in that dreadful place.

Early in 1900 the lesions in the nervous system extended. His powers of speech were now affected, but

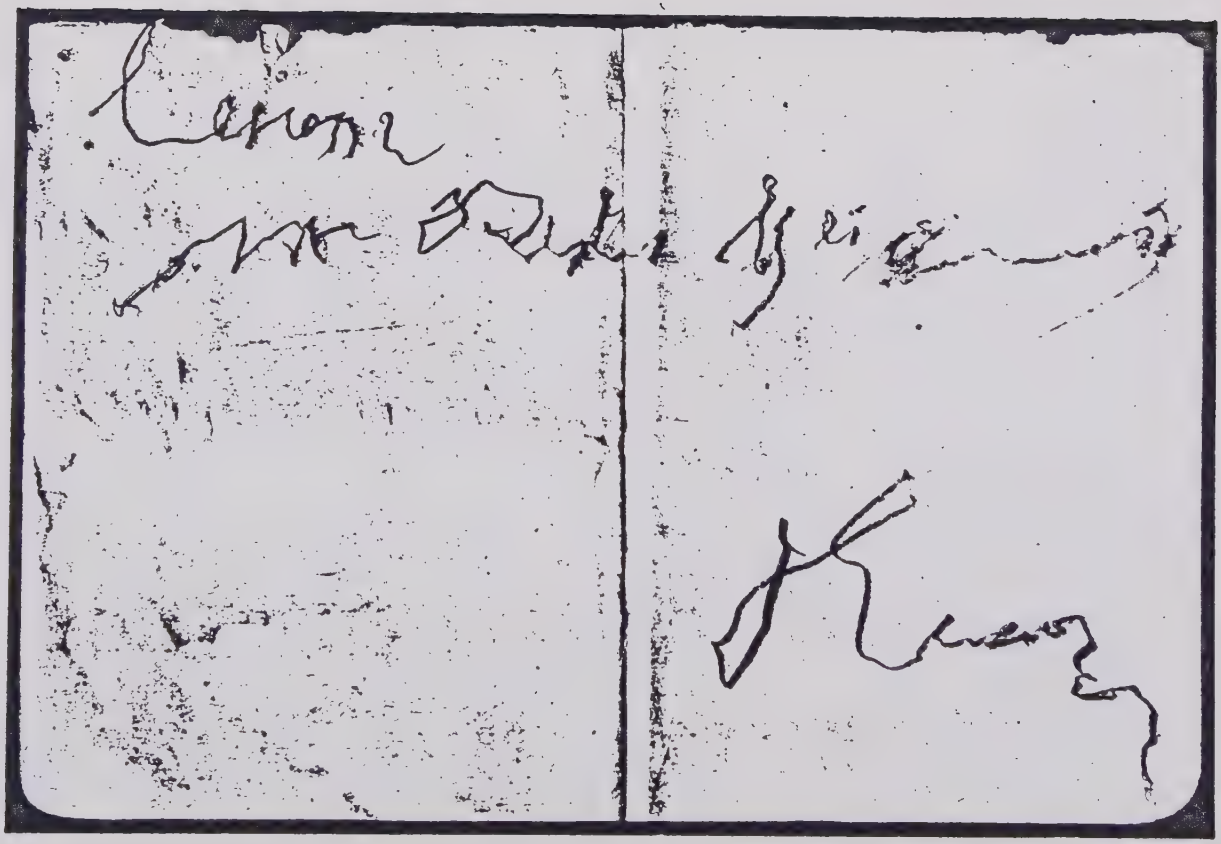
he could still recognise his friends though he could hardly pronounce their names. In August 1901, however, the paralysis spread alarmingly; all he could do now was to lie in his cage-bed day and night, refusing nourishment so far as he could, already almost blind and deaf to everything around him. The doctors gave him up at the beginning of 1902, but the heart was quite sound and he still lived on. At last, in February 1903, the deliverance came. On the 16th he was attacked by an affection of the lungs, to which his body was now too weak to offer any resistance, though there was still enough sensation left in the nerves for him to suffer agonies from paralytic cramps. It was seen that the end was near, and Haberlandt, Werner, and Köchert watched almost incessantly by his bed. But, as if to add the last touch of tragedy to his fate, none of them was in the room when he died. He passed away alone, except for the presence of an attendant, at 3 o'clock in the afternoon of Sunday, the 22nd February 1903.

On the 24th the body was taken from the asylum to a room in the adjoining hospital, where it lay for a time surrounded by flowers and wreaths. "Wolf was not disfigured," says Dr. Decsey, "but his friends were appalled at the sight of him. He looked like a small doll of white wood; the nose came sharply out of the waxen face; the delicate hands had become still more delicate; they were crossed and the fingers hung loose, like the fingers of a white glove. This was all Fate had left of the artist who once bore a whole tone-world in his brain—a fragment, a human ruin." It was the day of the Vienna Carnival; the dead musician was carried to his grave in the Votivkirche through decorated streets and past crowds of gay masqueraders. The church was full of musical people of all kinds,—friends of Wolf,

composers, executants, critics, and representatives of many musical institutions. The Vienna *a cappella* choir, conducted by Eugen Thomas, sang Wolf's *Ergebung*—an early setting, dating from 1881, of a poem of Eichendorff praying for the pity of Heaven upon poor humankind. When the coffin had been lowered into the grave, Haberlandt delivered a brief funeral oration, ending by quoting the poem of Kerner which Wolf had set to music of the most divine consolation—

> Zur Ruh, zur Ruh, ihr müden Glieder!
> Schliess fest euch zu, ihr Augenlider!
> Ich bin allein, fort ist die Erde;
> Nacht muss es sein, dass Licht mir werde!

The body did not lie long in the Votivkirche; it was soon removed to the cemetery in which repose the remains of Beethoven and Schubert, near to whom Wolf now sleeps his last sleep. An artistic monument to him, designed by Edmund Hellmer, was unveiled in the cemetery on the 20th October 1904. Other towns hastened to do what honour they could to his memory. Memorial tablets were placed on the house in Windischgraz in which he was born, and on Werner's house in Perchtoldsdorf in which so many of his songs were written. Streets were named after him in Graz and Mannheim. Memorial concerts were given in various places, and *Der Corregidor* was successfully revived in Munich in October 1903. The songs also began to have a good sale, and many articles on him appeared in the German magazines. Some of the pioneer discussions of his work had been already collected and issued in book-form in 1898, under the title of "Gesammelte Aufsätze über Hugo Wolf"; a second volume of them appeared in 1899, and a similar collection of essays on *Der Corregidor*



WOLF'S HANDWRITING IN 1901

in 1900. The first volume of Dr. Decsey's biography appeared in 1903, the year of the composer's death. In the same year Wolf's letters to Emil Kauffmann were published; they were followed by the letters to Hugo Faisst in 1904 and by those to Oscar Grohe in 1905; so that already the materials for forming a judgment upon the complete man are fairly abundant.

When the Vienna Hugo Wolf-Verein was dissolved in April 1906 it handed over to the town the composer's death-mask, his piano, and a few other personal relics. The remainder were given into the custody of the Vienna Wagner-Verein. In October of the same year an elaborate Hugo-Wolf Festival, organised by Hugo Faisst and that group of Swabian friends who had done so much for Wolf and his art during his lifetime, was held at Stuttgart. It lasted five days, from the 4th to the 8th of the month. The first two evenings were devoted entirely to the songs, of which seventy were given, drawn from the Mörike, Goethe, Spanish, Italian, Keller, and Eichendorff settings. On the third evening a performance was given in the church of Max Reger's arrangement for organ of some of the spiritual songs from Mörike and the *Spanisches Liederbuch*, while the chorus of the opera house sang the six *a cappella* settings of Eichendorff's poems. The fourth evening was devoted to *Der Corregidor*, while on the fifth a choral and instrumental concert was given, comprising some of the orchestrated songs, the "Spring Chorus" from *Manuel Venegas*, the *Elfenlied*, the *Feuerreiter*, the *Italienische Serenade*, and *Penthesilea*. So that unfortunate as Wolf was in his lifetime, posthumous justice has not been so slow-footed in his case as it has been in that of some other musicians.

So much of his character as concerns the general public has already been incidentally revealed in the foregoing pages. His occasional harshness of manner and speech was merely part of the fundamental sincerity of his nature; wherever art was concerned he went straight for the truth, in his opinions as in his music. He had a horror of sentimentality, of pose, in life as in art; and he was merciless to it no matter where or when he met it. His candour inevitably brought him enemies; but we have only to look round the circle of his friends to see that it was a personality of no ordinary charm that could command the willing devotion of so many men of high character and of such various dispositions. What one hears in private of some of the details of his life, interesting as it is to the moral pathologist, is not yet a matter for the public ear. If further information is to be given to the world at large it must come with full authentication from those among his personal friends who are best qualified to sift the facts from the legends. No feeling but one of the most poignant pity can fill us when we think of the gnawing misery of his life and the brutal, senseless tragedy of his end. The gods no doubt mean well, but their technique is bad. Nature is not so prodigal of brains of the first order that she can afford to fling them to the rubbish-heap in this blind and wasteful way. Since the death of Schubert there is no musician whose premature end has been so truly irreparable a loss to art.

PART II.—THE WORKS

CHAPTER I

THE SONGS

I

THOSE of us who have worked unceasingly at Wolf's songs, finding our admiration for them grow as our acquaintance with them has deepened, have no hesitation in putting him at the head of the song-writers of the world. He surpasses them all to the same extent and for the same reasons that Wagner surpasses all other musical dramatists,—in virtue of the vast range of his interests, his Shakespearean breadth of sympathy, the infinite plasticity of his conceptions, his gift for finding for each poem a musical expression so poignant and so veracious that one can never again imagine it being expressed in any other way. If you come to him with a pre-formed conception of the song as an exquisite melody for the voice thrown into high relief against a piano accompaniment, that is often of no particular significance in itself, you will of course rank him below Schubert. To place him, as some of us do, above Schubert is not to disparage that wonderful genius; Wolf himself would have thought poorly of any admirer of his who was guilty of insensitiveness to the

lyric beauty of most of Schubert's songs, and no instructed lover of Wolf is likely to be so limited in his sympathies. But to see a man critically is not to disparage him; and to see Schubert critically, in the light of the musical evolution of the nineteenth century, is only to recognise that along with his many heaven-sent gifts as a song-writer there went some serious defects, part of them inherent in himself, part due to his epoch and his environment. Like Mozart, he was a little too fluent; the music came out of him rather too easily for it always to come from a very great depth. His poetic sense was often at fault; he was not as discriminating as he might have been with regard to the poetry he set; the music was in him and had to come out, whether at the bidding of a poet or a poetaster did not greatly matter, much as an incurably benevolent person will give to the undeserving as freely as to the deserving, the sole desire being to feel the ecstatic inner glow of giving. He was not always careful to think out a poem as a whole, and to find a fresh expression for each fresh emotional point in it; he was often too content with the lazy strophic form, either repeating his music mechanically in different verses, or merely altering it according to a few easy formulas—a slight change in the accompaniment or a conversion of the major into the minor—that were themselves apt to become mechanical, while at times they led to a sheer falsification of the sense of the poem. He often gave too little care to his accompaniments. He often scanned without thinking, stretching or compressing the words to make them fit his music, and so falling into misaccentuations or throwing the weight of emphasis upon the wrong word. And, finally, he took up many profound poems in far too superficial a mood,

dashing irresponsibly into the music for them before he had really penetrated half-way to their secret. The relation of his music with many poems was not the marriage of equal minds; it was not even a passionate *liaison*; it was merely a bowing acquaintance from the other side of the street. In each of these respects Wolf showed himself the deeper artist—in his care not to set any poem that he had not absolutely taken up into his own being, in the passion for veracity that kept him in the closest touch with the poem at every point, in the profoundly searching probe of his psychology, and in the genius with which he changed his style with every poem he set. He had, in fact, just the gifts that Schubert either lacked or displayed only intermittently. He appeals to us as a poet no less than as a musician. It is as a musician alone, in many cases, that Schubert makes his main appeal to us; his melodies are often so divine in themselves that we scarcely trouble to think of the words. They have the beauty of pure, disembodied things, the beauty that catches the soul in a net, how and why we do not know,—all we know being that we are made captive. Now and then, in the very greatest of his songs, where a profoundly moving poem has shaken him through and through, and he sings melodies that are both ideal and real, ravishing in themselves and penetratingly true to the poem, a carolling in the sky that is at the same time a reading of earth, Schubert is indeed almost incomparable, singer and seer in one. But like every other great musician he has been smothered in uncritical adulation. Men write about him now according to a formula; they do not paint his real portrait, keeping their eye on the model the whole of the time. His excellences alone are dwelt

upon; no one completes the picture by noting the defects that were inherent in his qualities—especially the fluency that sometimes betrayed him into the superficial, and the occasional failure of the intelligence to rise to the full height of a great poem.

II

Now the secret of Wolf's peculiar power is that he pierced to the very heart of the poem as few musicians have done even in isolated cases, and as no other has done in so many varied cases. He allowed the poet to prescribe for him the whole shape and colour of a song, down even to the smallest details.[1] It was not that he was so little of a musician that he could not, like the others, bend any poem to his arbitrary will, but that he was so much a musician that he could accept any conditions the poet liked to impose upon him and yet work as easily under them as another man could do without such seeming limitations. The problem of

[1] A writer in a recent number of the "Zeitschrift der Internationalen Gesellschaft" tearfully complains that "the present-day doctrine of 'follow the words,' and never repeat them, is wholly subversive of the doctrine of form in music,"—the reason apparently being that if Handel, for example, had not repeated his words we should have had no Handelian choruses. But a Handelian chorus is one thing and a modern song another, and "form" does not mean the same thing in them both. One can only smile at the theory that sees anything "subversive of the doctrine of form in music" in the songs of Wolf. "If the dramatisation of music necessitates this," Cassandra goes on to declaim, "well and good; but let those who practise such species of art realise clearly that they are administering slow poison to the architectonic principle in music." "*The* architectonic principle!"—as if there were only one system of architectonics, applicable to every sequence of musical ideas, abstract or poetical,—as if the "form" and the matter were not as ideally suited to each other in Wolf's *Prometheus* as in Handel's "He gave them hailstones for rain."

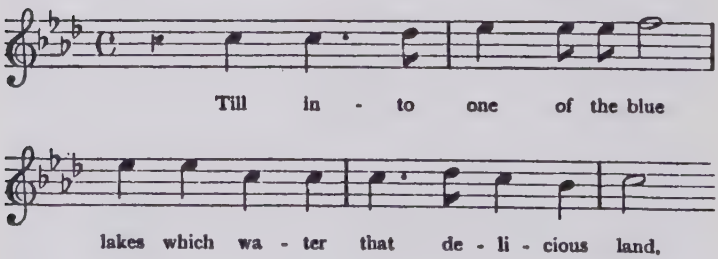
modern song-writing is something like that of the symphonic poem,—to keep the two arts of poetry and music in a perfect equipoise throughout. The abstract musician in a man tempts him to develop his musical picture purely according to the laws of its own medium, and thus is often apt to bring him into conflict with the poet, whose conception has followed a plan of its own in which no thought whatever has been given to the necessities of the musician. In the song, for example, to put the simplest case of all, it will often happen that a melody that is fine enough in and by and for itself will not coincide at all points with the words,—that if the melodic line is to flow on without rupture some significant point in the words must either be passed over or flatly contradicted; while on the other hand if this verbal point is to be given its due the very life of the melody, as a pure, self-existent thing, must be destroyed. The general habit of composers is to ignore everything in the words that will interfere with their developing their melody on its own lines. There is not a song-writer of genius, from Schubert to Brahms, in whose work examples of this sacrifice of the poet to the musician cannot be plucked by the handful; while the guilt of opera-composers in this matter is notorious. Everyone is familiar with the misaccentuation in the opening line of the aria "Durch die Wälder, durch die Auen" in "Der Freischütz," caused by Weber forcing the word "Wälder" to fit, willy-nilly, the melodic line of the music. Wagner, in his essay "On Operatic Poetry and Composition," has pointed out other errors of the same kind on the part of Weber and the early German opera-writers; Winter, for example, phrasing the same line differently in two successive statements

of it, merely in order to suit the structure of the melody—

Mein *Leben* hab' ich ihn zu danken,
Mein Leben *hab'* ich ihn zu danken;

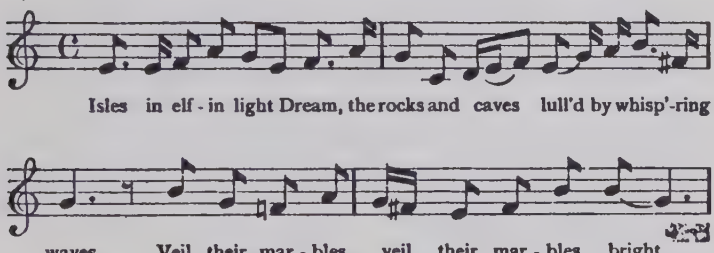
and Weber himself, in "Euryanthe," making his heroine sing at one moment "Was ist mein Leben gegen *diesen* Augenblick," and at another "Was ist mein Leben gegen diesen *Aug*enblick." The musician, in fact, is always too prone to forget the poet and to think solely of his music, with the result that the verbal accents and the melodic accents often clash at one point after another, the strong accent of the musical bar coinciding with either a quite unimportant word or the weaker syllable of an important one. English readers will see what is meant by taking Sullivan's "Golden Legend" and looking at Prince Henry's solo at the words—

Till into one of the blue lakes
Which water that delicious land
They cast the ring drawn from her hand.



Here, it will be seen, the necessities of the melodic idea make Sullivan stress many of the least significant words and syllables, the "in" of "into," the "blue,"—which is thrown into higher relief than anything else in the whole phrase,—and the "that" of the second line. The total

effect is to call our attention pointedly to the facts that the ring was thrown *into* the water and not over it or away from it, that the lake was *blue* and not green or yellow or any other colour, and that it was in *that* delicious land and no other. That composers can complacently pen such arrant falsities as these, and audiences can complacently listen to them, is a proof of how rudimentary the poetic sense of most musical people still is, in spite of all Wagner's efforts to teach them both by his theory and his practice. Even a musician like Elgar, who certainly feels deeply any fine poem he may be setting, can sometimes sacrifice the plain verbal sense of the lines to the imperious demands of his melody, as in the following instance from the first of the "Sea Pictures"—



where it would puzzle anyone to make out the poet's sense. The real meaning, degraded into prose, runs thus—

(1) Isles in elfin light dream ;
(2) The rocks and caves, lulled by whispering waves, veil their marbles bright ;

while this is what Elgar makes the poet say—

(1) Isles in elfin light.
(2) Dream the rocks and caves ; lulled by whispering waves.
(3) Veil their marbles bright,——

all the pauses and all the connections being made in the wrong place, and the verse becoming perilously like pure nonsense.[1]

Now the justness of Wolf's accentuation, the way in which the melodic accent coincides with the verbal, is wonderful. It is even more wonderful than Wagner's, for it is pretty clear that Wagner, being his own poet, sometimes thought of his melody first and then wrote words that would fit it.[2] Wolf had to follow another man's poem scrupulously, bring out into high relief the significant words of each line, and yet not permit this process to interfere with the purely musical interest of the phrase. How completely successful he was in this can be realised only by those who have studied him carefully. It is not merely that he abandons the line-divisions of the poet and runs the end of one line into the beginning of the next when the verbal sense flows over into the second. Anyone could do that. Weber did it in the "Durch die Wälder" aria, but, as Wagner shows, only to make the confusion worse confounded. One of the verses given him by his librettist runs thus—

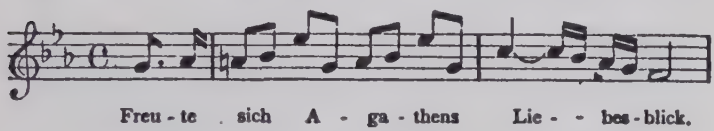
> Abends bracht' ich reiche Beute,
> Und wie über eig'nes Glück—
> Drohend wohl dem Mörder—freute
> Sich Agathens Liebesblick.

Weber rightly starts the final line of his melody not where the poet starts *his* final line,—with "sich,"—but where the

[1] Or look again at a passage, which is musically very striking, in "The Kingdom." Elgar, merely because his melody is fixed and the words must fit it, phrases the verse thus—"Let his habi*ta*tion be desolate, and let no *man* dwell therein, and his office *let* another take." The last two accentuations are obviously quite wrong.

[2] See his letter to Frau Wesendonck on the subject of the "Meistersinger" Prize-Song.

true sense begins—at "freute"; and he packs away the parenthetical "Drohend wohl dem Mörder" the best way he can by running the melody of it on to that of the preceding line. But he still cannot get away from his regular bar-divisions, with the accent coming down plump on the first beat of the bar; and as the final line with the "freute" added would be too long for the type of phrase he has in mind, he commences what is after all the real musical phrase with "sich," the "freute" coming in merely as the up-take from the preceding bar—



The word of first importance—"freute"—thus slinks in shamefacedly on the weak part of the bar, while the "sich," which is of secondary importance, takes all the prominence that the strong accent at the opening of the bar can give it. As Wagner says, this not only reveals the full absurdity of the lines as poetry, but makes it so hard for the ear that follows the melody to perceive the plain *sense* of the lines that he himself was for a long time ignorant of the real connection of ideas, and only became aware of it when the sheer unintelligibility of the verse as sung made him look into its verbal structure.

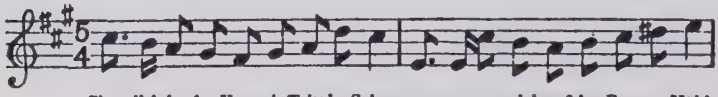
Wolf, with one or two trifling exceptions, never sacrifices the verbal sense and the verbal accent to the needs of the melody in this way; yet he always manages to give his melodic phrases a look of perfect naturalness. It all seems so inevitable, and sings so easily, as it were of itself, that one often does not suspect the difficulties that have lain in the composer's path, and the ease with

which he has surmounted them.[1] The lines come as smoothly from the singer's mouth as if the poet were reciting them.

In Mörike's *Jägerlied*

> Zierlich ist des Vogels Tritt im Schnee,
> Wenn er wandelt auf des Berges Höh';
> Zierlicher schreibt Liebchens liebe Hand,
> Schreibt ein Brieflein mir in ferne Land'; etc.

he catches at once the very lilt of the spoken lines by setting them to a melody in $\frac{5}{4}$ time—



Or look again at the phrasing in the lines—

> Warum, Geliebte, denk' ich dein
> Auf einmal nun mit tausend Thränen;

or

> Tratst du, o Bildniss mitleidschöner Qual,

---

[1] Paul Müller tells us that Wolf was particularly pleased with his own setting of Mörike's *Lied eines Verliebten*. Here each third line of the poem is irregular with the first two—

> In aller Früh, ach, lang vor Tag,
> Weckt mich mein Herz, an dich zu denken,
> Da doch gesunde Jugend schlafen mag.
>
> Hell ist mein Aug' um Mitternacht,
> Heller als frühe Morgenglocken:
> Wann hättst du je am Tage mein gedacht? etc.

Wolf preserves in the accompaniment to each of the four stanzas the same eight-bar melody (with various modifications) and keeps the three irregular lines of each stanza within this frame, at the same time varying the phrasing, in his usual style, in each verse.

in the second *Peregrina* (in the Mörike volume), or the lines—

> Glück, das nimmer ohne Wanken
> Junger Liebe folgt hienieden,
> Hat mir eine Lust beschieden,
> Und auch da noch muss ich schwanken.
> Schmeicheln hör' ich oder Zanken,
> Komm' ich an ihr Fensterlädchen—

from *Auf dem grünen Balkon* (in the *Spanisches Liederbuch*), and it will at once be seen how just the right syllables are accentuated, lengthened, or shortened, or thrown into special prominence by the rising or falling of the melody.

The lines last quoted may serve as an exceptionally telling illustration of the point that is being enforced. Later on in the song there occur the following lines, corresponding, as will be seen, with the earlier ones in poetic rhythm—

> Wie sich nur in ihr vertragen
> Ihre Kälte, meine Gluth?[1]
> Weil in ihr mein Himmel ruht,
> Seh' ich Trüb und Hell sich jagen.
> In den Wind gehn meine Klagen,
> Dass noch nie die süsse Kleine
> Ihre Arme schlang um meine.

---

[1] The two lines

> Junger Liebe folgt hienieden

and

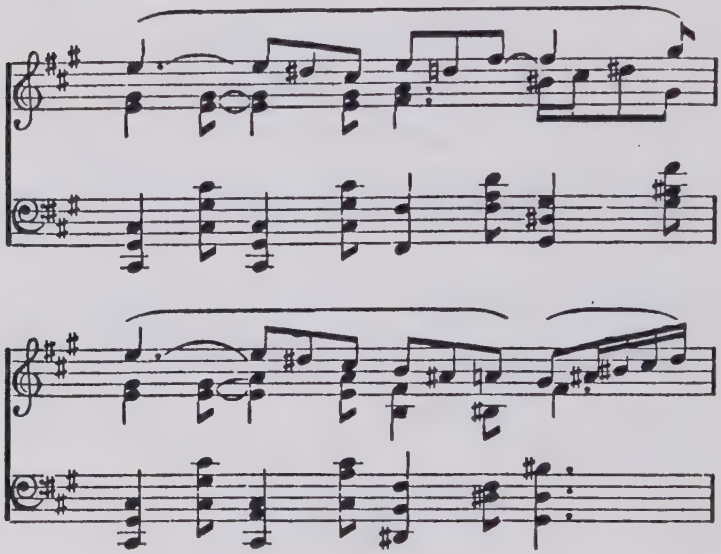
> Ihre Kälte, meine Gluth,

are of course of the same type of prosodial structure, like such lines as—

> But many weary moons I lived alone,
> Alone and in the breast of the great forest,—

from Tennyson's "The Lover's Tale," where the extra syllable in "forest" does not affect the ground-plan of the metre.

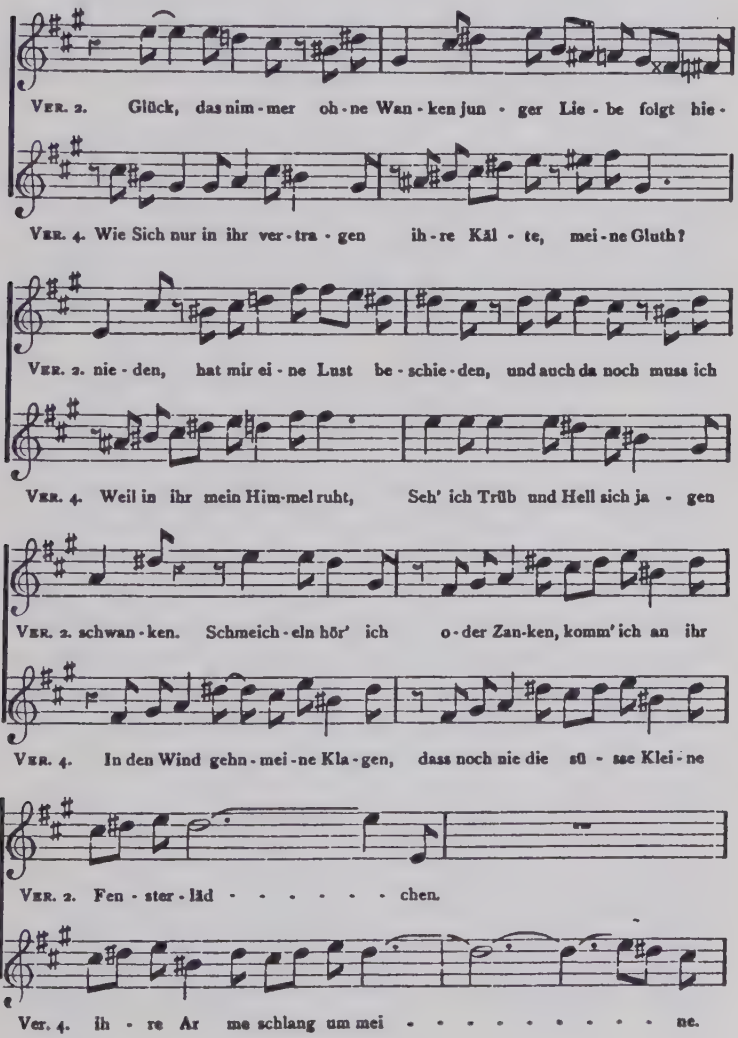
The piano part is the same in each case (with the exception of the final bar)—a flowing melody of this pattern—



suggesting the serenading lover.[1] Now observe, in the first place, the absolute difference between the melodies given to the voice in the two stanzas; in the second place the perfect justness of the accentuation in each case,—how the important "ihr," for example, is stressed and lengthened in the line "Weil in ihr mein Himmel ruht," how the "gehn" in the next line but one is given equal prominence with the "Wind," and how the two significant words of the final line "ihre" and "meine" are both thrown into high relief, while the

[1] The song does not commence here, it should be said. This is the eighth bar of the melody.

most significant of all—the "meine"—is dwelt upon at great length.


Ver. 2. Glück, das nim-mer oh-ne Wan-ken jun-ger Lie-be folgt hie-
Ver. 4. Wie Sich nur in ihr ver-tra-gen ih-re Käl-te, mei-ne Gluth?
Ver. 2. nie-den, hat mir ei-ne Lust be-schie-den, und auch da noch muss ich
Ver. 4. Weil in ihr mein Him-mel ruht, Seh' ich Trüb und Hell sich ja-gen
Ver. 2. schwan-ken. Schmeich-eln hör' ich o-der Zan-ken, komm' ich an ihr
Ver. 4. In den Wind gehn-mei-ne Kla-gen, dass noch nie die sü-sse Klei-ne
Ver. 2. Fen-ster-läd - - - - - - chen.
Ver. 4. ih-re Ar me schlang um mei - - - - - - - - - ne.

The full appropriateness of Wolf's declamation can only be appreciated after systematic perusal of all his work; but some idea of the accuracy of it may be obtained by the simple process of comparing one of his songs with some other musician's setting of the same words. Dr. Decsey has done this in the case of the *Klinge, klinge, mein Pandero*, from the *Spanisches Liederbuch*, of which there is a well-known setting by Adolf Jensen. A reference to this will show that in the second line Jensen, blindly following his own purely musical course and forgetting the sense of the poet, absolutely falsifies the latter's meaning. The words of the Spanish maiden are—

> Klinge, klinge, mein Pandero,
> Doch an And'res denkt mein Herz.

Jensen lengthens the "denkt" in the fourth bar, thus giving it an excessive weight, while the really important "And'res" is glided over quietly. But what the poet means to say is not that the troubled girl *thinks* of another, but that she thinks of *another*, all the while that she is forced to play light dance-music on her pandero for the amusement of men. Wolf of course gives the "And'res" more weight than any of the words that have gone before it. Again, in the lines—

> Wenn du, muntres Ding, verständest
> Meine Qual und sie empfändest,

Jensen gives a quite unnecessary emphasis to the comparatively unimportant "Wenn" and "Meine," and passes completely over the one significant word of all—the "Qual." Wolf throws this far out in his melodic line, doubly

enforces it by the harmony with which he accompanies it, and then takes the voice down in a kind of reverie at the words "und sie empfändest." The examples one could quote in illustration of this point are infinite.

III

In the second place, Wolf adds enormously to his range of expression by giving to the piano part a significance it had never previously had in the whole history of the song. His songs were indeed not written for "voice with pianoforte accompaniment"; the title-pages tell us that they are composed for "voice *and* pianoforte"—a quiet hint of the importance of the rôle assigned to the instrument. It has been objected against the songs, as it formerly was against Wagner's operas, that they are "unvocal," that the "centre of interest is often in the piano rather than the voice," that "the voice is treated like an instrument," and so on; it recalls to our minds how Wagner and other dramatists used to be accused of "placing the pedestal on the stage and the statue in the orchestra." The objection breaks down in each case. To admit that Wolf did not write "songs with piano accompaniment" nor Wagner vocal scenes with orchestral accompaniment is not to admit that either persistently shifted the main burden of expression from the voice to the instrument. In Wagner at his best the conception is homogeneous throughout, the voice, the orchestra, the gesture, and the stage setting all being necessary parts of an indissoluble whole; take one of them away and the full effect of the others is lost. The old cry that Wagner had made the orchestra more important than the voice

frequently meant nothing more than that the singer was no longer the centre of attraction, with the orchestra "accompanying" him like a big guitar. When people found that not only the vocal part but the orchestral part was full of music, they innocently assumed that because there was more music than usual in the orchestra there must be less than usual on the stage; it took them some time to realise that they were actually getting not less but more melody in opera than they had ever had before.

We must distinguish, of course, between a bad principle and a good principle badly applied. It is impossible to doubt, I think, that Wagner sometimes applies it badly; he occasionally gives us the impression of having conceived the orchestral tissue independently of the vocal part, and of having fitted the latter in afterwards as best he could,—sometimes not too skilfully. But the principle itself is a perfectly valid one. The prime duty of the musician is to express his poet as completely as possible. There is no law, human or divine, to compel him to limit his expressiveness to the voice alone. On the mere face of the case, if he can double the emotional effect by writing an accompaniment that shall be as eloquent as the vocal part, there is no reason why he should not, and every reason why he should, make us his debtors to that extent; while it is self-evident that there are numberless things that cannot be put into the voice,—comments on the situation, reminiscences of past events, foreshadowings of coming ones, suggestions of atmosphere, and so on, that only the instrument can take upon itself. There is nothing new, it need hardly be said, in the principle itself; every composer of the last two hundred years has recognised the value of it at some time or other, by allowing the

accompanying instrument—whether piano or orchestra—to say something that could not have been said so well or perhaps not at all by the voice. Gluck did this in the celebrated aria of Orestes "Le calme rentre dans mon cœur," in "Iphigenia in Tauris," where the orchestra, with its restless heaving, gives the lie to Orestes. Schumann, again, in the instrumental finale to the "Frauenliebe" cycle, gives an added note of poignancy to the tragedy by putting in the piano a soft reminiscence of the happy opening song. In each of these cases the accompaniment contributes something to the total expression that the voice could not give, but which is certainly indispensable. The only new feature of the principle is the more logical way in which the moderns have applied it. The force of it, indeed, is unconsciously confessed even by those who cannot use it. The weaker men—some of the present-day Italian opera-composers for example—often throw the melody into the orchestra and keep the singer on a kind of monotonous patter. They lack the necessary combination of contrapuntal and dramatic power; they cannot add a voice part that shall at the same time express the sense of the words and fit in musically with the orchestral texture. Wagner often ran the two parts beautifully in harness; but now and then, as I have said, the real inspiration is in the orchestra, the voice part being pasted in more or less factitiously. Wolf really amalgamated the two much better. He had one of the most contrapuntal brains of modern times. Counterpoint with him was a living thing; he could scarcely think of a melody without other melodies consanguineous with it spontaneously suggesting themselves to him; we have seen, indeed, that in scoring *Der Corregidor* he had to put a curb upon this tendency of his to be always adding new

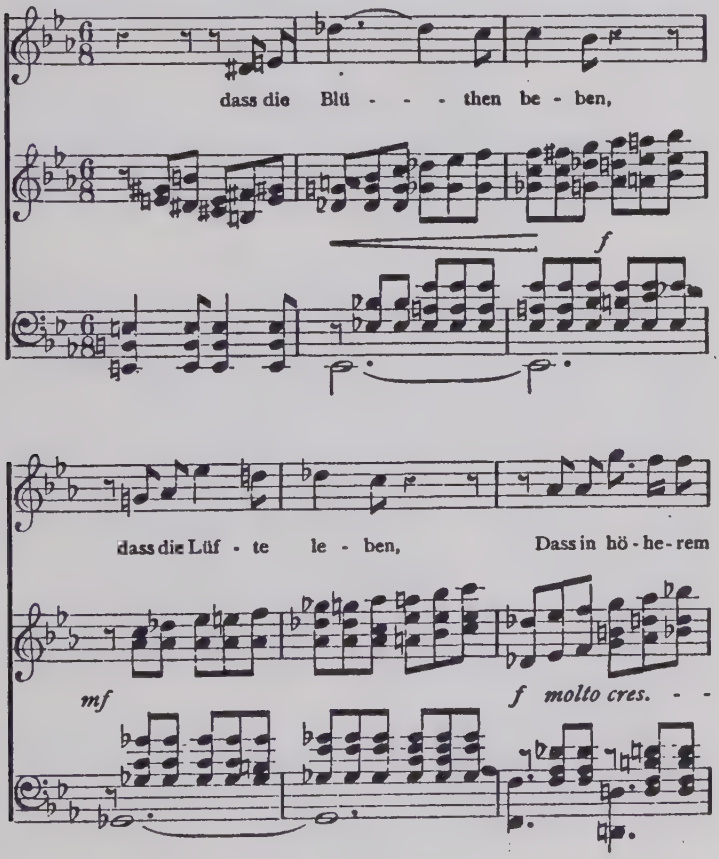
counterpoints to the themes, not for the sake of the academic exercise, of course, but because one strain of melody would sympathetically call up another in his mind.

It was this gift for vital, eloquent counterpoint that made it possible for him to see his songs, as it were, in two dimensions at once,—to think simultaneously along two apparently independent lines, that of the vocal and that of the instrumental part. Play through the piano part of many of them, and it will seem self-contained and self-sufficient, apparently neither needing nor permitting any addition to it. Surely, you say to yourself, this song was conceived as a piano piece, and the voice part can only have been put in afterwards by a process of reflection, and cannot possibly have a *raison d'être* of its own. But now examine the voice part alone, and you will see that this is wonderfully logical throughout—that it not only follows faithfully the general sense of the poem but that it curves and darts, rises and falls, hastens or stands still in conformity with particular suggestions in the words. Finally, sing and play the two parts in conjunction, and you will discover that they fit each other with the most extraordinary closeness; the composer has clearly thought along the two lines at once, although the vocal phrases may begin and end apparently where they like, without any reference to the rhythmical structure of the melody in the piano. An examination of *Auf dem grünen Balkon* or *Geh' Geliebter* from the *Spanisches Liederbuch*, or the *Ständchen* from the Eichendorff volume, or the *Auf einer Wanderung* from the Mörike volume,—to take a few of the best-known songs,—will show the extraordinary ease and freedom of Wolf's manner. Voice and instrument apparently go each its own way, regardless of the other,

yet always co-operating to the same end. Look, for instance, at the lines—

"Dass die Blüthen beben,
Dass die Lüfte leben,
Dass in höherem Roth die Rosen leuchten vor,"

in *Auf einer Wanderung*—



or at a passage like that on page 12 of *Der Corregidor*,[1] and ask yourself whether there could possibly be greater individualism in the respective parts and a more harmonious communism of effect. The songs have the rare quality of being at the same time satisfactory to the musical ear and to one's sense of poetic fitness,—for there is not a point in the poem that is not brought out somewhere or other, in a leap or fall or suspension of the melody, in a sudden change of harmony that comes to us like an illumination or goes through us like a stab, or a soft and gradual change that is like the almost insensible alteration wrought in a landscape by the ceaseless coming and going of sun and cloud.

And it is all done so simply, with such apparent absence of calculation, and with such perfect naturalness of effect, that at first one is hardly conscious of the consummate art of it, while when one does at last notice this

[1] See p. 251 of the present volume.

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and begin to analyse it, one is astounded at the completeness of the unity between the poem, the melodic line, the phrasing, the accentuation, the harmonies, and the general movement of the piano part. Take, as one of the simplest examples that can be given, the touching setting of Justinius Kerner's "Zur Ruh, zur Ruh"—one of the profoundest, and withal simplest, utterances that ever came from Wolf's pen.

Zur Ruh, zur Ruh
Ihr müden Glieder!
Schliesst fest euch zu,
Ihr Augenlider!
Ich bin allein
Fort ist die Erde;
Nacht muss es sein
Dass Licht mir werde.

The piano part is apparently almost complete in itself,—a noble song of resignation. Bringing the voice in on the third note of a descending chromatic melody in the piano, and taking it still further and further down, Wolf at once conveys the impression of the tired limbs gently sinking into rest. The piano repeating the original phrase, the voice throws out above it the exhortation to the eyes to close tightly,—the adverb "fest" being given the greatest prominence in every way. The melodic curve of "ihr Augenlider" is perfectly suggestive of the soft closing of the tired eyelids. The "Ich bin allein" is murmured on an expressive inner note of the harmony, which surrounds it and closes in on it like the shades of night enveloping a weary sleeper. The next words, describing the passing away of earth from his sight and his thoughts, sink still lower and are enveloped in still darker harmonies. Then the piano part, without losing any of its nocturnal quality, becomes more composed than

it has been in the three preceding bars; on the words "Nacht muss es sein" the voice descends to the lowest depth it touches in the whole song, while it rises again on the word "light" to more than an octave above the note to which "night" was sung.

The second part of the song is no less wonderful in the intuitive rightness of all its lines and colours.

O führt mich ganz,
Ihr innern Mächte,
Hin zu dem Glanz
Der tiefsten Nächte!
Fort aus dem Raum
Der Erden Schmerzen
Durch Nacht und Traum
Zum Mutterherzen.

An enharmonic modulation by which the A flat on which the first part of the song ends (the key note of this part) becomes the G sharp of the key of E, takes us at once into a new atmosphere. The appeal for spiritual illumination rises and rises in intensity till it culminates in a passionate outburst on the high A flat on the word "Traum," the harmonies in the piano part all the while up to this point giving the impression of something struggling for birth. With the last word the mood again becomes one of grateful resignation; then, after the voice has ceased, the piano suggests in the softest of colours the gradual closing in of the long-desired sleep upon the eyes of the singer. The whole thing is an indissoluble unity; the expression of the poem is not in the voice alone or in the piano alone but in both, and to try to think of them in separation is like trying to dissociate the scent of the rose from its colour and its form.

As for the contention that Wolf's writing for the voice is "unvocal," that need not detain us long. The

same charge has been brought against all his predecessors; even Schubert in his own day was accused of writing badly for the voice and of making his accompaniments so difficult as to be unplayable. It is a curious paradox that the people who complain that Wagner and Wolf treat the voice like an instrument are really themselves guilty of that heinous crime. It would be nearer the truth to say that the German school treats the voice as a voice, and the Italian school treats it as an instrument. An exquisite melody like "Ombra mai fù," for example, is equally effective on the violin, a 'cello, or an orchestra as in the mouth of a singer. The whole beauty lies in the music, and within certain limits it is a matter of indifference which instrument renders it. But you cannot imagine any of the great vocal passages of Wagner or Wolf—the Feuerzauber, for instance, or the scene between Siegmund and Brynhilde in the second Act of the "Valkyrie," or *Das verlassene Mägdlein*, or *Anakreons Grab*, performed on an instrument. They belong to the voice alone, because only the voice, that can speak as well as sing, can give these particular tones their final vitality. This is real writing *for the voice*, which is not merely an instrument for the tracing of beautiful melodic lines in the most beautiful of colours, but an organ for the utterance of beautiful poetic thoughts. Whatever is impressive when said can be made impressive when sung, if the singer has brains and a heart as well as a larynx. The vocal music of Wagner and Wolf is "unvocal" only for those who cannot understand it. They do not understand it because, whatever their musical culture may be, they are deficient in poetic culture; they can sing but they cannot think; they are musical instruments, not human beings.

IV

The phrase that is fast becoming current that Wolf is the Wagner of the song requires examination; it is one of those half-truths which, if accepted as the whole truth, are likely to mislead the unwary. We may fittingly call him the Wagner of the song in the sense that he dominates that form as unmistakably as Wagner dominates the musical drama; he has given it something of the same universal scope and put into it the same weight and stress of thinking. And it is true that he has not only profited, as all modern musicians have done, by the impulse Wagner gave to every form of poetic music, but has made use in some of his songs of a system akin to that of leading motives, that is supposed to be specially Wagnerian. But the songs in which Wolf employs what can really be called a leading motive in the piano part are quite few; and wherever he does so it is not because the method, *quâ* method, has any hypnotic fascination for him, but because that happens to be the best way in which to treat that particular song. A case in point is *In der Frühe*, in the Mörike volume. Here the whole song is based on a phrase of five notes, that changes its tint from bar to bar in conformity with the changes of human mood or external picture in the poem. In *Der Feuerreiter*, the wild phrase that describes the raging of the fire becomes transformed at the end into an elegy upon the man who has met his death in the flames. Sometimes, again, Wolf will take a phrase from one song and use it with a new meaning in another that has some relation with the first. He does this in the *Peregrina* Lieder in the Mörike volume, and in the *Als ich auf*

dem Euphrat schiffte, *Dies zu deuten bin erbötig*, *Nicht Gelegenheit macht Diebe*, and *Hoch beglückt in deiner Liebe* from the Goethe set. But as a rule it will be found that the characteristic figures repeated so often in the songs are not really leading motives, but more of the nature of background or atmosphere to the scene, that give an additional significance to the vocal melody by perpetually changing in sympathy with it. Thus in *Nun bin ich dein*, in the *Spanisches Liederbuch*, practically the whole song of forty-four bars is built upon a phrase of four notes in the piano part; its very persistency admirably conveys the idea of the penitent's brain being obsessed by the one idea—the contrast of human weakness with the steadfast strength of the Virgin at whose feet he is pouring out his fevered plaint. Wolf has here, as always, found intuitively the particular type of setting the poem demands. In *Mühvoll komm' ich und beladen*, from the same volume, there is again one figure used persistently in various forms, the psychology to be expressed being that of a sinner unable to get away from the *idée fixe* of his sin. So with the exquisite *Der Mond hat eine schwere Klag' erhoben*, in the first *Italienisches Liederbuch*. One short phrase runs right through the piano part, but it is not treated in the quasi-symphonic form in which the modern leit-motiv is used; it remains practically unchanged, indeed, throughout, for the simple reason that in this case the whole poem expresses just one idea,—the moon bewailing the loss of two of its finest stars, which have become the eyes of the poet's beloved. In other cases where a theme used to illustrate one thing is transformed so as to suggest another,—as in *Denk' es, o Seele*, where the light prancing of the horses in the meadow becomes a slow, heavy, terrifying tread when they are imagined to

be drawing the dead body to the grave,—Wolf does no more than carry out a principle that has been practised by every song-writer from Schubert onwards. His peculiar virtue is not in the fact that he adopts the principle, but in the fertility and eloquence with which it is applied.

V

He had, in truth, no such "formula" for the song as those who do not know his work would be apt to imagine from hearing it spoken of as the application of Wagnerian principles to the lyric and the ballad. A cursory glance at any of the volumes will show that his styles were as various as the poems he set. Take a dozen of the songs at random,—*Der Gärtner*, *Verborgenheit*, *Gebet*, *Begegnung*, *Der Tambour*, *Das verlassene Mägdlein*, *Der Feuerreiter*, and *Storchenbotschaft* from the Mörike volume; *Mein Liebster hat zu Tische mich geladen* and *Was für ein Lied soll dir gesungen werden* in the *Italienisches Liederbuch*; *Klinge, klinge, mein Pandero*, *Nun wandre, Maria*, *Wenn du zu den Blumen gehst*, and *Geh'*, *Geliebter* in the *Spanisches Liederbuch*; *Prometheus*, *Ganymed*, *So lasst mich scheinen*, *Anakreons Grab*, and *Epiphanias* in the Goethe volume; a mere glance at them is sufficient to show that Wolf, so far from working upon any set "principle," Wagnerian or other, had a far more fluid style than any other of the great song-writers. He had no "style" in fact; he had styles, and an infinite variety of them.

He unconsciously adopted, that is, a quite new manner both with each new poem he set and each new poet. His change of mental outlook and thence of musical idiom whenever he took up a new poet has often been remarked

upon; just as Wagner altered his entire idiom when he put "Tristan" down and set to work on "Die Meistersinger," so that a page of the one opera transplanted to the other would at once show up as an inharmonious patch incapable of blending with its surroundings, so Wolf's style varied with the poet he was setting to such an extent that a song out of the Eichendorff or the Goethe volume, for example, would strike us as an alien thing among the Spanish or the Italian Lieder. Further, within the general style of each particular volume there is an endless variety of shades of styles—one, in fact, for each song. We have only to turn the pages of the volumes to see this, without reading a bar of the music. Every page *looks* different from the others; Wolf, it can be seen, applies a different treatment to each song. There are no formulas, no *clichés*, either in the voice or the accompaniment. The reason was that Wolf saturated himself with the poem he set as no song-writer ever did before. The process of musical composition, as Schopenhauer and Wagner dimly saw, is one of clairvoyance. If we are ever to understand it, it must be by approaching it through the scientific data given by the phenomena of hypnotism and double consciousness. A hypnotic subject, when in the cataleptic state, can do many things more perfectly than he could in his waking state, and do many other things which in his waking state he could not do at all. The caprine surety of tread of the somnambulist walking along a narrow ledge, the many instances that have been adduced of men in the dream-state solving problems that had baffled them during the day, or carrying out trains of thought that would have been beyond their capacity at other times, are striking examples of the intensification that certain

faculties undergo during hypnosis. All artistic creation is of the same order, — the abnormally sympathetic understanding of other souls by a dramatist or a novelist or a musician, as well as the life-like representation of character by the actor; for the moment the artist ceases to be himself and lives the mental life of another,[1]—he is in a state of hypnosis, the depth and completeness of which determine the degree of veracity of his vision. The mystic who attains supreme illumination in a swoon is another illustration of the fact that, as Coleridge says, "all truth is a species of revelation." It was in this trance-state—whether induced by opium or not does not matter—that Coleridge conceived his "Kubla Khan," "Christabel," and "The Ancient Mariner," three poems that are so incomparably real precisely because they are only dreams, but dreams with a flawless consistency and logic of their own. Alfred de Musset, in the Preface to "La Coupe et les Lèvres," has finely expressed this transmutation of the artist's soul, during the process of creation, into the thing he is describing—

> "Au moment du travail, chaque nerf, chaque fibre
> Tressaille comme un luth que l'on vient d'accorder.
> On n'ecrit pas un mot que tout l'être ne vibre.
> (Soit dit sans vanité, c'est ce que l'on ressent.)
> On ne travaille pas,—on écoute,—on attend.
> C'est comme un inconnu qui vous parle a voix basse.
> On reste quelquefois une nuit sur le place,
> Sans faire un mouvement et sans se retourner."

The physiological explanation of all these hypnotic states is probably that a number of the outlying faculties

[1] A hypnotised person is a peculiarly expert actor; persuade him that he is a certain character—Napoleon, for example—and he will represent it with a vividness of which he would be incapable in waking life.

are temporarily put to sleep, and the energy they no longer need goes into some great central faculty—which would account for the concentration of the brain upon one object and its indifference to others, the creative artist and the somnambulist alike being notoriously deaf and blind to most things around them while they are in the trance-state. This state is seen at its best in the act of musical creation. Here the abstraction from the outer world is greatest, and the entranced musician seems to become by intuition one with the very soul of things,—speaking the highest wisdom, as Wagner said, in a language his reason does not understand. We know that Schubert when composing was quite unaffected by any amount of conversation around him, so intense was his hypnotic self-absorption; he was, as his friend Vogl said, in a state of clairvoyance.

Now it was in this clairvoyant state—and perhaps a deeper one than Schubert usually fell into—that Wolf habitually composed. He saturated himself absolutely in every poem that he meant to compose, living its life completely for the moment to the exclusion of every other influence.[1] Hence the impression his music gives us of having penetrated to the inmost being of the poem,—of making visible, indeed, many hidden secrets in it of which the poet himself was probably unconscious,—and at the same time the spontaneous change of style with each poem he set. Each one was a microcosm in itself, bathed in its own atmosphere and living under its own laws. We know that when writing his songs he always

[1] Dr. Haberlandt has described Wolf's manner of working when the fit was on him. For days he would scarcely sleep, eat, or go out of the house. When the songs were written he would run to play them over to his friends, laughing and crying at the same time.

conjured up before his mind's eye a realistic picture of the scene; he told Kauffmann, for example, that in the case of *Weylas Gesang* he imagined "the protecting spirit of the island of Orplid sitting on a rocky ledge in the moonlight, holding her harp in her hands"; in the second *Cophtisches Lied* he pictured a "banquet of wise men from every land, singing a jocund, high-spirited song and draining their bumpers at each refrain," and so on.[1] He neglected nothing, in fact, that could help him to concentrate his whole faculties upon the little picture to be painted or the drama to be acted, so that his hypnotic possession by it might be complete. He would read the poem one day, and reflect upon it until it had entered into every nerve-cell of his system, but think very little or not at all of how he would set it. He would go to sleep, and in the morning the song would be already made by some mysterious alchemy,—so full-formed that in noting it down[2] his pen could hardly keep pace with his brain, while scarcely a note or a rest of it required to be altered afterwards. The poems literally set themselves. Wolf was only the expressive medium through which all the deeper significances that were latent in the poem were made visible and audible.[3]

[1] Some of Schubert's errors were due to his falling into the clairvoyant state too soon, as it were. He would sometimes begin the composition of a song after reading only the first verse or two. The inevitable result was that the general character of the opening music belied the general character of the poem. "Die böse Farbe" is a case in point. Wolf was incapable of errors of this kind.

[2] He made no sketches. The first draft was the last.

[3] In a letter to Eckstein of 27th March 1888 he says that the music to "Das verlassene Mägdlein" was composed without any effort of volition on his part. He greatly admired Schumann's setting of it, and had no intention of doing one of his own; but being deeply affected by the poem, the music came to him, he says, almost against his will.

It was this absolute identity he established between the poet and himself that made it so essential for him to choose the finest poetry if he was to write fine music, and caused him to write below his best when the poem was not of the first order, as in the case of some of the music to "Das Fest auf Solhaüg." It was this also that filled him with a singular reverence for the poets,—particularly Mörike, the co-operation of whose genius had enabled his own to bear fruit. No other musician, indeed, before or since, has shown such touching gratitude to his poets. We have seen that it was through his long association with Mörike's poems in 1888 that Wolf really found himself; not until then, after many experiments in many fields, did he understand what his own best gift was and of what it was capable. Mörike unlocked a hundred doors within him that had only been waiting for the coming of someone with the master-key. Wolf was conscious of the service, and always spoke of Mörike as his redeemer. "What was all my composing, before I came to my real self," he might well say to Grohe, "but a long, agonising attempt at suicide?" It was with a purpose that he set at the head of the Mörike songs the lovely "Convalescent's Ode to Hope"; it was the expression of his own gratitude to the poet who had brought him out of a night of hopelessness to days of the richest, happiest life. And when the volume was issued it was not Wolf's but Mörike's portrait that appeared as the frontispiece,—a rare and exquisite stroke of self-abnegation.

In after years, nothing moved him so much as to come by any means whatever into closer association with the dead poet. The father of his correspondent Kauffmann, in Tübingen, had been a personal friend of

Mörike, and Kauffmann possessed many autograph letters and manuscripts of the poet. In March 1890 he sent Wolf, for his birthday, the manuscript of the poem "An Longus." "You have," Wolf wrote back, "unconsciously sent me a birthday gift than which I could have wished for nothing more glorious. I contemplate the handwriting of the poet, which I now see for the first time, with fervent delight; its regular characters harmonise splendidly with the balanced nature of the poet." When he called on Kauffmann he was deeply moved at the sight of the various autographs. "How willingly," he writes in November 1892, "would I again cast a glance into this wonderfully rich and intimate spiritual world? I look back with delight upon those hours when you spread out these neat manuscripts before my hungry eyes, and read them one after the other with emotion in your voice, while I listened in breathless ecstasy. What a young and fresh life breathed forth from these yellow leaves! These were no dead characters; always the living word rang through them; everything was full of meaning and significance, and shaped itself into forms of the utmost life. What a lovely, incomparably lovely evening it was!"

Some months later Kauffmann sent him a portrait of Mörike that the musician had not hitherto known. Wolf writes in high praise of it; it seems to him to be truly like the poet as he had imagined him. "Verily a delightful face, which recalls to me all the marvellous hours which, hallowed by his genius, once gave me such deep happiness. A thousand and again a thousand thanks!" His friends could give him no greater pleasure, indeed, than to send him some new biography or volume of reminiscences of his beloved poet. We can catch the

very tremor in Wolf's voice and the gleam in his eye as we read the letters in which he speaks of all these little things that brought him into closer touch with the idol. The whole history is strangely touching; there is nothing in the long record of the relations of poet and composer to compare with this devoted, chivalrous affection of the great musician for the dead poet, the spread of whose fame has, indeed, been materially helped by the new beauty Wolf gave to his songs.

It was the sense of how inseparable the poem was from the music he had given to it that made Wolf, at his recitals, first read and expound the poem to his auditors before he allowed a note of the music to be heard. And it is in the nature of the poem that we must look for the explanation of everything that happens in the music, and in the intensity with which Wolf assimilated the poem that we have the secret of his wonderful intimacy and veracity. He set his face sternly against the suspicion of mere music-making in the song, against writing a single bar, that is, the justification of which could not be found in the words. Now and then we come, mostly in his earlier work, upon a stroke that cannot be justified from the poem, a bar or a turn of phrase that was born of the absolute musician in him, not of the poet. In his later period, for instance, he would not have separated, by a piano interlude of half a bar, the nineteenth and twentieth lines of the *Fussreise*. But tiny indiscretions of this kind, which can be gathered by the score in all other song-writers, are extremely rare even in his early work, and quite absent from his later. It is astonishing how logical, in the highest sense of the word, his music is, what a thoroughly good reason there is for every rise

or fall of the melody, every modulation or change of colour in the piano. Nodnagel was once playing some of his own songs to Wolf when the latter interrupted him with the question "Why did you modulate there?" and Nodnagel had to admit that there was no reason for it in the poem, no reason at all except that his purely musical sense had run away with him for a moment. It is in Wolf, in fact, that we have the perfected ideal of the song-composer of which Wagner dreamed. That ideal was sketched in an article Wagner wrote in 1851 on the songs of the Swiss composer Wilhelm Baumgartner. After pointing out that the "fashionable" composer simply makes music for a poem as a fashionable tailor makes a suit of clothes, Wagner goes on to say that the musician who starts from a genuine poetic basis must adopt another method. "Whoever does not aspire to be a modern popular song-composer in the sense named, but who, as a musician, seeks to express by means of his art the feeling which a poem has called forth from him, so as to communicate it to others, will be compelled to preserve a far more intimate connection with the poem than this. The feeling acquired by him as a musician gives him first of all the tone-picture, in which it expresses itself with satisfying clearness; but he can only succeed in giving the necessary individual shape to that tone-picture by placing its outward form in closest relationship to that of the word-poem." The good in Baumgartner's settings came from his allowing the contents of the poem to decide the form and the contents of the music. "These tone-poems are noble throughout, and in them all influence of modern mannerism disappears in proportion as the sensuous (*sinnlich*) form coincides with that of the poem; the very need of which is felt by the composer

whose attitude towards the poet is a natural one. Baumgartner, if he would remain faithful to his sound artistic feeling in this direction, must end by seeking for the poet who in his poems no longer leaves anything to the purely musical initiative of the composer, but brings to him the complete sensuous and sentient germ for the blossoming of the melody; in other words, the poet who not only stimulates his feeling to musical invention, but whose verse itself supplies the living stuff for the formation of the melody."[1] It goes without saying that the musician who lives again the life the poet has lived in writing the lines will unconsciously reproduce the same variety of forms and moods as there are in the poems. This is what Wolf did. When he set Goethe he *was* Goethe, not Mörike or Geibel,—and Goethe not in one aspect only but in all.

VI

For Wolf would not have made his mark so deeply as he has done upon the history of the song if he had done nothing more than declaim correctly, arrange his musical sentences so as to ensure right verbal accentuation, and make the curves of his melody and the alterations in his harmony follow the suggestions of the poem. All this might have been done without the final product being of any particular value. What brings us back to Wolf time after time is the extraordinary breadth, depth, and variety of his conceptions. It is hardly an exaggeration to say that whatever poem he took up he set once for all; if he set it for the first time, we feel that

[1] See Wagner's "Letters to Uhlig, Fischer, and Heine," pp. 181–184.

no one else need hope to do it better, and if he set it after other men he put them all into a position of more or less hopeless inferiority. The *Genesene an die Hoffnung*, *Anakreons Grab*, the three Michelangelo songs, the *Fuss-reise*, *Mühvoll komm' ich und beladen*, *Tief im Herzen trag' ich Pein*, and a score of others that he mostly set for the first time,—who will have the temerity to put fresh music to these? And the poems that other great musicians had already composed,—is there a single case in which he has not gone beyond his predecessor in beauty, in truth, in power, in intimate understanding of the poet? Compare, for example, his setting of Mörike's "An eine Aeolsharfe" with that of Brahms, and notice how the latter, good as it is and sufficient as we once thought it, almost fades out of the memory when once we know Wolf's; how Wolf not only gives us the whole of the tender mystery breathed from the harp-strings where Brahms gives us only a hint of it, but gives it us without intermission, keeping us breathing the right atmosphere from the first bar to the last; how poignantly true and beautiful he make such lines as—

> Und Frühlingsblüthen unterweges streifend,
> Übersättigt mit Wohlgerüchen,
> Wie süss bedrangt ihr dies Herz!

Brahms just catches for a moment a glimpse of the real mood and then carelessly lets it go before he has properly made it his own; Wolf dwells upon the final line, repeats the "wie süss" three times and then repeats the whole line —his sense of their importance may be gauged from the fact that he scarcely ever repeats a line or a word in a poem—and makes them like a long sigh, a reverie in an enchanted world that is neither of pleasure nor of pain

but something of the two commingled. In the crucial lines

> Aber auf einmal,
> Wie der Wind heftiger herstösst,
> Ein holder Schrei der Harfe
> Wiederholt, mir zu süssem Erschrecken,
> Meiner Seele plötzliche Regung;——

where Brahms, by repeating the strain of the opening, makes no distinction between the new "cry" of the harp-strings and their earlier message, Wolf suggests the changed atmosphere of the poem by a change of tonality and of melodic outline. And in the postlude to his song, where the magical harmonies of the harp die gradually away into silence as the wind that has brought the message ceases to agitate the strings, Wolf is as far beyond the pedestrian ending of Brahms as high imaginative poetry is beyond fairly emotional prose.

A similar comparison, which any reader can make for himself, between Jensen's setting of *In dem Schatten meiner Locken* and that of Wolf, will show how superior Wolf's is in every respect, poetical and musical. He does what Jensen did not do—visualises the scene, and so draws from the life. Or compare again his *Das verlassene Mägdlein* (in the Mörike volume) with Schumann's (opus 64, No. 2). The poem deals with a poor girl who goes down in the morning into a cold kitchen to light the fire, thinks sadly of her faithless lover, and sighs, as the tears well from her eyes, "Would the day were over,"—a simple subject, of which Mörike has made one of his most affecting poems, while Wolf has built one of his masterpieces upon it. Schumann's setting, so far as it is congruous with the words at all, is so in a general way only; he aims at voicing the grievous, but it might be the grief of anyone in any circumstances. Wolf's

picture is clearly that of the desolate kitchen in the chill dawn, and the unhappy little drudge setting about her dreary work with a heavy heart. Her music is simple to the verge almost of inarticulateness, for the class to which she belongs feels pain but is almost dumb under it, like the animals. The atmosphere is grey and cold throughout, even in the middle section, where the girl's heart warms for a moment at the thought of her lover. Wolf's setting of the second stanza again,—describing the kindling of the fire in the grate,—achieves with its bare apparatus of just two or three chords a poignant veracity that leaves Schumann far behind. Note again the difference in the two treatments of the words

Ich schaue so darein
In Leid versunken——

where the girl's head sinks as she gazes sorrowfully in the fire. Schumann flies off to the next words with only a crotchet break between; Wolf, by means of four expressive bars for the piano, brings home to us still more closely the abject misery of the girl. Schumann next fails in two ways to get the full value of the line in which the recollection of the lover suddenly flashes into the girl's brain. In the first place, he weakens the contrast between this and the preceding verse by merely setting the words

Plötzlich, da kommt es mir

to the end of a musical phrase of which the first part has been given to

Ich schaue so darein
In Leid versunken;

that is, the new verse is only a musical completion of its predecessor, not a contrast to it, as it ought to be. In the

second place, the dramatic force of the "plötzlich" is lost by giving to the first syllable a crotchet value and to the second a quaver value. With Wolf the whole phrase is taken more quickly, thus suggesting the irruption of a new and warmer emotion into the girl's heart; the "plötzlich" comes out, in two rapid quavers, with startling suddenness, and the ascent of the voice to the highest point it touches in the whole song throws this train of thought into correspondingly high relief; then a calmer mood, softened by a retrospect of her dream, comes with the words

Dass ich die Nacht von dir
Geträumet habe.

Finally there is a return to the curiously cold and hollow harmonies of the commencement, and the song is ended not with a major chord that contradicts the whole poem, as in Schumann, but in the proper mood of irresolution and hopelessness.

VII

It would be unfair to institute any detailed comparison between Wolf's monumental *Prometheus* and Schubert's, if only for the reason that, as Wolf himself points out in a letter to Kauffmann, ballads like this could only be satisfactorily set to music in the post-Wagnerian epoch. Goethe's great poem was beyond the means of expression of any song-writer of the beginning of the nineteenth century. In spite of some weaknesses of conception and its occasional careless phrasing,—as in the false stress laid on "und" in the lines

Ihr nähret kümmerlich von Opfersteurn und Gebetshauch
eure Majestät,

and in its total perversion of Goethe's meaning by the accentuation of "gleich" instead of "mir" in the lines—

> Hier sitz' ich,
> Forme Menschen nach meinem Bilde,
> Ein Geschlecht, das mir gleich sei,

Schubert's setting is in many ways a strong one; but it is so hopelessly overshadowed by the colossal structure of Wolf that it would be futile even to use it for the purpose of illustrating Wolf's superiority. To some extent this is also true of the *Ganymed* of Wolf and that of his predecessor, though here the distance between the two is not so enormous. But a comparison of them would show at once how much more intimate Wolf's music is, how it has all the tremulous atmosphere of longing that Schubert's lacks; the treatment by the two composers of the one word "Mir" in the line

> "Mir! mir! in eurem Schooße aufwärts"

is a typical example of Wolf's penetration into the very depth of Goethe's mood and of Schubert's failure to get very far beneath the surface of it.[1]

The distance between Wolf and Schubert—a distance due partly to the interval of time that separates them, but also in part to the greater depth of Wolf's thinking and the superiority of his general culture—can be most easily estimated by looking at their settings of the lyrics from Goethe's "Wilhelm Meister." We must not forget, of course, that *no* musician in Goethe's time rose to the full

[1] Paul Müller tells us that Wolf would not set any poem that had already been composed by Schubert if he thought the latter's music to it was adequate. For this reason he refused to touch poems such as "An Schwager Kronos" and "Geheimes," Schubert's music to which he greatly admired. His settings of the "Wilhelm Meister" lyrics, "Prometheus," "Ganymed," and other poems were in the nature of a criticism of Schubert.

height of the poet's greatest work. In those days the musicians were not contemporary with the poets in the sense that they are now. No musician contemporary with Goethe could probe to the depths of "Faust" or "Wilhelm Meister"; the capacity for this came only in the next generation or two, with Wagner, Liszt, Berlioz, Schumann, and Wolf. In our own day, on the other hand, the musician is the real contemporary and the intellectual equal of the poet. Strauss's "Salome" and Elgar's "Gerontius" have done for Oscar Wilde and Cardinal Newman what it needed a complete intellectual and emotional upheaval among the nations to make it possible for any musician to do for Goethe. We do not feel, again, that Debussy's "Pelleas and Melisande" is a generation behind Maeterlinck's in feeling and technique. Now this is certainly the feeling we have when we play through Beethoven's settings of Goethe, and the feeling that thoughtful observers of that epoch must surely have had; the songs seem tentative and amateurish in comparison not merely with the poems themselves but with the general depth and breadth of Beethoven's instrumental music. How is it, we ask ourselves, that this musician can think so profoundly when left to himself, and, in comparison, so superficially when he allies himself with Goethe? That Beethoven really tried to penetrate to the depths of the poems is shown by his making four attempts to set "Nur wer die Sehnsucht kennt"; something in the poem evidently haunted him and left him with the consciousness that he had not found anything like a veracious expression for it in music.

We must allow, then, for the fact that if Schubert did not pierce to the secret of the "Wilhelm Meister" lyrics, no one else in that age did; and part of the reason may

have been that the musician of those days lacked the general culture of the musician of the Romantic and post-Romantic epochs. On the other hand Schubert was really a song-writer predestined by the grace of God, which Beethoven and the others were not; and it was he, if anyone, who should have shown himself worthy to stand by Goethe's side. The musician who could set "The Erl-King" and "Gretchen at the Spinning Wheel," as Schubert did before he was eighteen, must be held *a priori* capable of setting the songs from "Wilhelm Meister"; and if he did not put the same genius into these as he did into the others it must to a very large extent have been because he did not assimilate them so intimately. And when we find Schumann, with all the advantages of the later culture, also failing to set the songs with the same vital intensity as Wolf, we are bound to recognise that Wolf's superiority to both Schubert and Schumann came from the superiority of his insight into the soul of the poet no less than from the advantages of his historical position. Further, when we find a musical historian of eminence saying that "Schubert's music to these Goethe songs is so perfect that any attempt to alter it must prove a failure," and that it is "folly to set these songs to music again at all,"[1] our only comment must be that he also has failed to realise the poems. For it needs no comparison with a later setting—needs no more than a thoughtful reading of the lyrics themselves—to see that Schubert's treatment of them is frequently superficial.

Schubert at times, like Mozart, had to pay the inevitable penalty for possessing a brain that found it as easy to make music as the eye does to see or the liver to

[1] Reissmann, "Life and Works of Schumann," English translation, pp. 201, 202.

secrete. Where the current of utterance flows with such endless, effortless, painless facility it cannot always run deep. For whatever poem Schubert took up he was fairly sure to find a musical expression that would be to some degree congruous with it; but often he did not get beyond a merely general congruity. This is frequently the case with his "Wilhelm Meister" settings. He reproduces in his music the general mood of the poem, and even at times the particular mood of a particular line or phrase; but he never gives us the impression of having probed the emotion of the poem to its full depth, or having done much more than apply to it some of those ready-made and fairly appropriate *clichés* of musical emotion with which a nature like his or Mozart's is so plentifully stocked. There is no attempt to get beyond the general to the particular, so to sink himself in the psychology of Mignon or of the old Harper as to realise what it is that makes their peculiar feelings different from those of a thousand other people who have their troubles and their longings,—no attempt, that is, to paint in his music the same portraits that Goethe has painted in words. It goes without saying, of course, that the songs have many fine touches; no song by Schubert could be totally devoid of beauty or interest. But on the whole his "Wilhelm Meister" settings are not distinguished by any psychological depth; they are products of his musical facility rather than of his poetic comprehension. A merely cursory examination of them will suffice to show how little of the best of himself he has put into them, how little trouble he has taken to see each poem as a character-study in itself. Time after time he can be seen to be writing with his fingers rather than with his brain. All his mannerisms come out,—those mannerisms

that are a certain sign that there is none of the clairvoyance of vision, none of the total, self-forgetting absorption of the musician in the poem, that creates a new manner for each new matter.

Look at the "Kennst du das Land," for example. See how he obeys one of his curious impulses to end the second line with a decisive full close in the major, though by so doing he makes a false division between the second and the third and fourth lines of the poem; how he shirks the problem of thinking the whole lyric out by lazily turning the major melody of the first stanza into the minor at the third,—a perfectly meaningless transformation. In "Nur wer die Sehnsucht kennt," again, notice how the blind impulse to wind up the first section of a song in the major leads him into a complete falsity, the effect of the melancholy opening being dissipated and the whole sense of the words being contradicted by the placid, comfortable major termination of the phrase. Other instances of the same mannerism might be cited, such as the complete obscuring of Goethe's meaning by the major closes on the word "Mächte" in "Wer nie sein Brod," and again at "denn alle Schuld rächt sich auf Erden." Add to these defects an abuse of tiresome and inexpressive triplet-figures in the accompaniments, and an indolent reliance on the strophic form, that often betrays him into bad misaccentuation of the words, and it will be seen that Schubert was never very deeply possessed by these poems, —that he set them in a more or less mechanical way, vaguely sensing their underlying emotions but never realising them in terms of music as profound as themselves. He never saw all the subtlety there is in the "Wilhelm Meister" lyrics; for him they were just pretty poems, mostly of a melancholy cast, to which the

ordinary musical formulæ of melancholy would quite easily apply.

It would take up too much space to examine all the settings of the lyrics by modern musicians,—Liszt, Bungert, Tchaikovski, and a dozen others; and it is all the more unnecessary for our present purpose in that none of these men having systematically set the whole of the poems, the general question we are considering does not arise in regard to them,—the question as to how far they have been able to grasp the full significance of Goethe's creations. With Schumann's work, however, this question does arise. Schumann has left settings of almost all the "Wilhelm Meister" lyrics and ballads, that are full of interest both on their own account and as steps towards the complete realisation of Goethe's meaning that we get in the settings of Hugo Wolf. Schumann had the culture and the knowledge of life that Schubert lacked; and these, with the added advantage of a more modern idiom of song-writing, brought poems of the type of those in "Wilhelm Meister" much closer to him than they ever came to his great predecessor. Even with Schumann there are traces of the old bad inflexibility of the musician in his attitude towards the poet,—clumsy joinings and separations of lines and verses, for example, that show that the musician has not quite caught the poem up into his being and made it his own. But on the whole the Schumann settings are much nearer to the truth of things and to Goethe than those of Schubert. In "Wer nie sein Brod," for instance, Schumann maintains throughout the haunted, obsessed mood that Schubert achieves only in spasms; while in the second stanza there is real horror and revolt against the injustice of the gods to men, instead of the mild conventional fluting of Schubert. In "An die

Thüren will ich schleichen," again, there is an agitation, a sense of hopelessness, of unrest, that can nowhere be found in Schubert's setting, with its excessive regularity of phrasing and its dead uniformity of accentuation. The "Kennst du das Land," "An die Thüren," and "Heiss' mich nicht reden," are all finely conceived, expressing something like the profundity of emotion that is contained in the poems.

It was not until Hugo Wolf took them up, however, that the "Wilhelm Meister" lyrics were set to music fully worthy of them; no one has entered so intimately as he into all their finest shades of feeling. As every critic of discernment has noted, in Wolf's setting of the Harper's songs there is a veritable *pathological* quality that no other composer has managed to get. Wolf, indeed, with his customary penetration into the very depths of his poet, and his power of visualising for himself the contents of a poem, has seen the old Harper just as Goethe saw him. He does not set the songs as mere isolated fragments, mere poetical expressions of a mood of discontent. Schubert's settings might be, and probably were, the work of a man who had never read "Wilhelm Meister,"—who had met with the poems apart from the novel and made music for them without fully understanding them. Wolf always has the story in his mind. *His* Harper is Goethe's, —the man whose sister has borne him a child, and who has lost his reason under the shock of her death and the anguish of his own thoughts. Over all Wolf's music to "Wer sich der Einsamkeit ergibt," "An die Thüren will ich schleichen," and "Wer nie sein Brod mit Thränen ass" there hangs this cloud of morbidity, the mental gloom of the Harper as Goethe describes him,—"a miserable man, conscious of being on the borders of insanity." And

fine as is the general conception of the songs, they are worked out from point to point with an ease and consistency to which there is no parallel in the other settings. There is nothing in the Schubert or Schumann versions to equal the ground-plan of the "Wer nie sein Brod" or that of "An die Thüren," with their wailing chromatic descents, or the perfectly successful handling of the second verse of "Wer sich der Einsamkeit ergiebt," which has proved a stumbling-block to everyone else, or the score of subtle harmonic *nuances* and little flashes of colour here and there that give a particular word just the emotional force it needs, as on the "Nächte" in the second line of "Wer nie sein Brod." Even finer than the Harper's songs are those of Mignon. The "Kennst du das Land" is as far above Schumann's in intensity and concentration of passion as Schumann's is above Schubert's. The "So lasst mich scheinen" is so much beyond the finest of all other settings as to put it even out of the reach of comparison with them; Wolf at his best rarely achieved anything so poignantly pathetic as this little masterpiece, the full effect of which can be felt only by those who know the curious child as she appears in Goethe's story. In the "Heiss' mich nicht reden" he achieves quite simply what it costs Schumann two or three times as much effort to achieve; though Schumann's version, if a little too passionate for the situation, is a great and splendid song, that makes Schubert's setting look rather colourless and unimaginative. Wolf's setting of "Nur wer die Sehnsucht kennt" cuts even deeper than Tchaikovski's masterly setting of the same words. The constant manipulation of one figure in the accompaniment gives unity to the song; and the long recapitulation of this passionately sad theme in the piano after the wild

cry of "Es schwindelt mir, es brennt mein Eingeweide," and before the final half-resigned "Nur wer die Sehnsucht kennt" is repeated, is a stroke of genius. The song ends, too, in just the mournful, questioning mood that the words require, and which has not been quite caught by any other composer. In the Harper's ballad, "Was hör ich draussen vor dem Thor" he again shows his extraordinary power of casting a poem in the one mould from start to finish. Schubert's music to the words is quite undistinguished. Schumann's has some excellent moments, but the total effect is scrappy, the poem as a whole, indeed, rather making for disconnectedness of musical treatment. Wolf manages to avoid this cleverly by the use of a kind of leit-motiv, representative of the minstrel's song, which he uses in the piano to the opening words of the King—

> "What notes are those without the wall
> Across the portal sounding?" etc;[1]

thus at once suggesting the scene outside the castle and the melody the minstrel is singing, and getting over the difficulty of finding a direct musical equivalent in the voice for the unmusical words of the King. The use of the same leit-motiv in the piano when the poet describes the minstrel as about to commence singing, and again as the melody in the voice itself when the minstrel breaks out into the central verse of the poem—

> "I sing but as the linnet sings
> That on the green bough dwelleth," etc.;

are both devices that give complete musical and pictorial unity to the ballad.[2] Wolf, in fact, *visualised* this poem

[1] I quote from Carlyle's translation of the poem.

[2] It is an evidence of the exactingly critical way in which he looked at his own songs that Wolf wanted to cut this fine ballad out of the Goethe volume.

as he had done the others. The secret of the superiority of all his "Wilhelm Meister" settings is that the music to them came directly out of the heart of the poems; he *saw* the characters and the scenes with the same conviction and the same distinctness as Goethe himself had done.

VIII

The range of his expression is no less remarkable than the intensity of it. To think of his songs one by one is to see defiling before the eye a veritable pageant of humanity in epitome, a long procession of forms of the utmost variety, all drawn to the very life,—lovers and maidens in every phase of passion and despair, poets, rogues, humorists, philosophers, hunters, sailors, kings, lovable good-for-nothings, Hedonists, Stoics, religious believers of every shade of confident ecstatic faith or torturing doubt. They are set in every conceivable form of environment; the whole panorama of nature is unrolled before us—flowers, mountains, clouds, the sunset, the dawn, the dead of night, the salt open sea and the haunted inland waters,—together with everything in nature that has voice or movement—the elves, the birds, the wind, the fire. For volume and plasticity and definiteness of characterisation there is nothing like it in music outside Wagner. No two characters are the same; each bears about him all the distinguishing signs of his native land, breathes his own atmosphere, wears his own dress, thinks with his own brain. A religious song in the *Spanisches Liederbuch* is as different from one in the Mörike volume as Spain is from Swabia, as Southern Catholicism is from Northern Protestantism. The passion of the women in the Spanish

or Italian songs is another thing than the passion of those in the Mörike or Goethe songs. When Wolf, again, plays humorously with life it is in a style and an idiom that vary with every character he represents,—Goethe's Rattenfänger; Eichendorff's Schreckenberger, or his Glücksritter, or his Scholar; the scornful women of the Southern songs, whose derision sometimes lies so dangerously close to anger and hatred; the quasi-Oriental Hedonists of Goethe's "Schenkenbuch," singing of the joys of the tavern;—all are as different in speech and in bearing as their prototypes in real life would be. *Truer* music, in the full sense of the word, there has never been. Wolf practically never repeats himself in the songs; every character is drawn from the living model. It is a positively Shakespearean imagination that is at work,—Protean in its creativeness, inexhaustibly fecund, and always functioning from the inside of the character or the scene, not merely making an inventory of it from the outside. We may best express the difference between his manner and that of the average song-writer in the words in which Coleridge distinguishes Shakespeare's method of creation from that of his contemporaries: "Shakespeare's intellectual action is wholly unlike that of Ben Jonson or Beaumont and Fletcher. The latter see the totality of the sentence or passage, and then project it entire. Shakespeare goes on creating, and evolving B out of A, and C out of B, and so on, just as a serpent moves, which makes a fulcrum of its own body, and seems forever twisting and untwisting its own strength." It is just another way of saying that the more inspired the artist is the more unconsciously, the more hypnotically, does he do his work; he is the partly automatic medium through which a vision of the clairvoyant brain finds for itself

material form and substance and articulation. Men who write in this incandescent state of the soul are themselves afterwards astonished at not only the veracity but the close logic, the organic interfluence of one part into another, of what they have created. It was so with Wagner and his "Tristan." His letters show him almost naïvely wondering how he has been able to give birth to such a marvel; the poetic subject possessed him so completely that it wrote its own music, as it were. Hence not only the passion, the beauty, and the truth of the music, but the unique logic of the form of it, the inevitability of each transition in it; it grows like a tree or a living body, as if impelled by the universal forces and moulded by universal law.

Wolf wrote in the same clairvoyant way, the poem itself creating its own music; all Wolf did was to apply to the poem the incubating ardour that could draw out the latent music in it and make it actual, as heat brings out upon the paper the characters that have been written on it in invisible ink. He reproduced not only the psychology of the poem but the external scene and the very atmosphere in which it was set. Whatever poetic picture he looked at he saw unerringly and as a whole. In "Der Zwerg" Schubert has set a poem that tells of an unhappy lady going out to her death in a boat, alone with a dwarf; when she has perished the dwarf also puts an end to himself. Schubert has set it quite impressively, but it is not difficult to imagine how different Wolf's setting would have been. Schubert gives us a generalised picture of unhappy people flying to death for a release from their pain; all he says would be equally applicable to fifty people in the same frame of mind. Wolf, we may be sure, would have described it all not in general but in

particular terms. He would have made it all as definite and unmistakable to the ear as a painter would to the eye. We should have been left in no doubt as to the scene of the tragedy and the lineaments of those who took part in it. It would not have been, as it is with Schubert, any man or any woman in any place; the dwarf and the lady would have been as different from each other and from the general human type as Hunding is from Siegmund and both from any of the characters of Mozart's operas; and we should have been as certain of the lake and the general atmosphere of the place as we are of the sea in the "Flying Dutchman," or the garden in "Tristan," or the flame that encloses Brynhilde's rock. There would have been nothing vague, nothing stereotyped; it would have been that particular scene and no other, with everything in it *pris sur le vif*. And if anyone doubts this, let him think of the different human physiognomies and psychologies and the different scenic suggestions in a few of the songs, such as *Prometheus*, *Seemanns Abschied*, *Der Genesene an die Hoffnung*, *Lied vom Winde*, *Ritter Kurts Brautfahrt*, *Anakreons Grab*, *Ganymed*, and *Nun wandre, Maria*, and ask himself where in Schubert or anyone else there is such completeness not only of human portraiture but of external painting, such an entire absence from one song of the emotional or pictorial formulas that have done duty in another. We may partly explain it, if we like, in terms of the development that music has undergone since Schubert's day; but even to explain the fact in that way is necessarily to admit it. But most of the difference comes from something else than the mere difference between 1820 and 1890. The difference lies in the very nature of the men; Wolf may not have had the exquisite disinterested

loveliness of Schubert, or the same vision of the light that never was on sea or land; but he indubitably had a deeper comprehension of men and the world, a greater breadth of sympathy, a keener probe of psychology, and a more consummate flexibility of style.

IX

The greater number of the perdurable songs of Hugo Wolf were written between 1888 and 1891. Those years saw the composition of the Mörike, Goethe, and Spanish volumes, most of the Eichendorff songs, the first volume of the Italian Lieder, and a number of settings of various poets. After 1891 there came only the second Italian volume (1896), Reinick's *Morgenstimmung* (1896), and the three Michelangelo songs. Between 1877 and 1888 Wolf wrote a great many Lieder, a few of which have been published,—some in his lifetime, in the volume of *Lieder nach verschiedenen Dichtern*, others after his death, in the volume of *Lieder aus der Jugendzeit*, or separately, as in the case of the three Eichendorff songs which he rejected from the second edition of that set. Most of the youthful work has of course been eclipsed by the later, but it is all very individual and arresting, and some of it singularly mature. Even in the songs written in 1877 and 1878 there are abundant premonitions of the later Wolf; the verbal phrasing often departs from the regular metrical formulas and has much of the expressively free articulation of his later manner; even at this time he seemed instinctively to change his style in accordance with the nature of the poem; and the piano parts have unusual freedom and eloquence for the work of a boy of seventeen or

eighteen. Among the songs which his own exacting standard of taste allowed to appear during his lifetime are some of first-rate quality. The splendid *Die Spinnerin*, composed in 1878, is extraordinarily mature; it is in its way as remarkable an achievement for a boy as the "Erl-King" of the youthful Schubert. The *Morgenthau* (1887) is early-Schumannesque, but full of simple charm and fragrance. *Das Vöglein*, *Mausfallen-Sprüchlein*, and the two *Wiegenlieder* are still good enough for most men to sign, and suffer only in comparison with Wolf's own later work.

Between 1878 and 1888 he wandered about from poet to poet, taking up in turn Scheffel, Goethe, Mörike, Kerner, and Heine, and unmistakably developing in strength. Especially fine are the *Sechs Gedichte*, containing the deeply-moving *Zur Ruh, zur Ruh* (1883), the mighty *Wachterlied auf der Wartburg* (1887), that is like a monologue for the brass of the orchestra, the noble *Der König bei der Krönung* (1886), where there is a faint suggestion of the King's prayer in "Lohengrin," the solemn and statuesque *Biterolf* (1886), and the *Wanderers Nachtlied* (1887), where the idiom foreshadows that of the devotional Mörike songs. Some of the Eichendorff lyrics of that epoch show the same steady growth of power, like that of a wave gradually swelling upwards to its crest. The easy strength of the two *Der Soldat* songs and of *Die Zigeunerin* (1886 and 1887), and the poetic atmosphere of the *Nachtzauber*, indicate a great advance on the earlier work both in conception and in technique. Then the wave reached its crest in 1888 in the volume of fifty-three settings of Mörike.

It is rather strange that not only should previous song-composers of the first rank have mostly failed to see the

musical value of Mörike's poems, but that Wolf himself, who set the *Mausfallen-Sprüchlein* as early as 1882, should not have made a more systematic use of them until 1888. Mörike, it is true, had not a wide reputation until long after 1888; and it is possible that he was generally known only by a few isolated poems that had become current detached from the general mass of his work.[1]

One can hardly imagine any composer knowing the poems as a whole and not seeing at once what ideal matter they offered for music; in this respect they rank with the lyrics of Goethe and Heine. Mörike had something of the painter's eye as well as the poet's imagination, and by the help of this he often attains a definiteness of image and a concision of phrase that are rare even among the best lyrists. He gives the musician precisely the kind of poem he needs,—the embodiment of an emotion that is of itself almost musical in its nature, and

[1] Edward Mörike was born 8th September 1804 at Ludwigsburg. In 1822 he entered the Hochschule at Tübingen, taking as his chief studies Theology and Philosophy. He left Tübingen in 1826, and for some time travelled about as an assistant preacher. In 1832 appeared his novel "Maler Nolten" (in which are contained the two *Peregrina* songs that Wolf set to music). In 1834 he settled in Cleversulzbach as Pastor, living quietly, enjoying nature, and making much poetry. His first volume of poems appeared in 1838; their delicate intimacy of feeling probably prevented their becoming widely known at that time, when men's minds were mostly filled with political matters. In 1843 he left Cleversulzbach, taking up his residence the following year in Mergentheim. In 1846 appeared a long poem, "Idylle von Bodensee, oder Fischer Martin." Five years later he married, having been appointed teacher of literature at the Katharinenstift in Stuttgart. A fairy tale, "Das Stuttgarter Hutzelmännlein," was published in 1852, and his story "Mozart auf der Reise nach Prag" in 1856. He resigned in 1866, and died on the 4th June 1875.

Mörike's fame grew very slowly. There can be no doubt that much of the modern interest in him has been stimulated by Wolf's settings of his poems. Wolf was greatly hurt by the omission of his own name, in a book on Mörike published in 1894, from the list of composers who had set the poems to music. It throws a sidelight on the slow spread of his own fame.

is wrapped up in just as many words as are necessary to give form and substance to the elusive aerial thing, but without a word beyond these. Take, as a specimen, *Das verlassene Mägdlein*—

Früh, wann die Hähne krähn,
Eh' die Sternlein schwinden,
Muss ich am Herde stehn,
Muss Feuer zünden.

Schön ist der Flammen Schein
Es springen die Funken;
Ich schaue so darein,
In Leid versunken.

Plötzlich, da kommt es mir,
Treuloser Knabe,
Dass ich die Nacht von dir
Geträumet habe.

Thräne auf Thräne dann
Stürzet hernieder;
So kommt der Tag heran,—
O ging' er wieder!

or, again, *Ein Stündlein wohl vor Tag*—

Derweil ich schlafend lag,
Ein Stündlein wohl vor Tag,
Sang vor dem Fenster auf dem Baum
Ein Schwälblein mir, ich hört' es kaum,
Ein Stündlein wohl vor Tag.

Hör' an, was ich dir sag',
Dein Schätzlein ich verklag';
Derweil ich dieses singen thu',
Herzt er ein Lieb in guter Ruh',
Ein Stündlein wohl vor Tag.

O weh! nicht weiter sag'!
O still! nichts hören mag!
Flieg' ab, flieg' ab von meinem Baum!
—Ach, Lieb' und Treu' ist wie ein Traum
Ein Stündlein wohl vor Tag.

Better "stuff," to use Wagner's term, for the musician could not be imagined; it kindles infinite emotion in him, and at the same time that it gives his music a concrete support its austere economy of words leaves the music perfect freedom to develop in its own way, so far as it needs to do in the song.

If of all Wolf's work there remained only this one volume, it would still be sufficient to place him on an equality with the very greatest of the song-writers of the world. Group other men's best songs as you like so as to concentrate their excellences within the covers of one volume, and the contents will barely compare with this of Wolf's for range of subject, constancy of inspiration, depth of feeling and of thinking, and variety of resource in the form. Let us choose, if we will, the volume[1] of Schubert that contains the great bulk of his finest work,—the "Erlkönig" (1815), "Gretchen am Spinnrade" (1814), "Der Wanderer" (1816), "Lob der Thränen" (1817), "Die Forelle" (1817), "Die Junge Nonne" (1825), "Ave Maria" (1825), "Du bist die Ruh" (1823), "Auf dem Wasser zu singen" (1823), "Der Tod und das Mädchen" (1817), "Rastlose Liebe" (1814), "Geheimes" (1821), "Ständchen" ("Hark, hark the lark") (1826), the "Schöne Müllerin" cycle (1823), the "Winterreise" cycle (1827),—comprising such songs as "Der greise Kopf," "Der Wegweiser," "Der Leiermann," and "Die Post,"—and the "Schwanengesang" (1828)—Schubert's last set of songs, containing great things like the famous "Ständchen" ("Leise flehen meine Lieder"), "Aufenthalt," "Abschied," "Der Atlas," "Am Meer," and "Der Doppelgänger." This list embraces representative songs of Schubert from the year (1814) in which he commenced song-writing with

[1] The first of the eight volumes of the Peters Edition of his songs.

the wonderful "Gretchen am Spinnrade" to the year of the no less wonderful "Doppelgänger" and his own death (1828),—a period of fourteen years. The sober judgment of history must surely be that the work of all this long period can barely compare with the Mörike volume of Wolf,—composed in little more than four months in one year,—for scope of matter, and certainly cannot compare with it for variety of manner.

The latter point surely needs no labouring; the incomparable adaptability of Wolf's style of treatment to the nature of the poem he is setting can be disputed only by those who do not know his work. As for the other point, let anyone who desires to test the truth of it go through the volume with some sense of poetry, some knowledge of music, and an open mind. In what other volume of the carefully selected works of other men shall we meet with so many different orders of emotional expression and pictorial or atmospheric suggestion? Run the eye over a few of the songs, and think of the faculty of plastic creation they reveal; the variety of human types—*Das verlassene Mägdlein*, *Agnes*, *Jägerlied*, *Der Gartner*, *Der Jäger*, *Erstes Liebeslied eines Mädchens*, *Lied eines Verliebten*; the various phases of religious emotion portrayed in *Seufzer*, *Auf ein altes Bild*, *Schlafendes Jesuskind*, *Charwoche*, *Zum neuen Jahr*, *Gebet*; the painting of nature and of the sub-human or non-human in the *Elfenlied*, *Citronenfalter in April*, *Um Mitternacht*, the two *Auf eine Christblume* songs, *Lied vom Winde*, *Nixe Binsefuss*, *Die Geister am Mummelsee*; the elemental strength and warmth of *Der Feuerreiter*; the deep and varied human feeling of *Der Genesene an die Hoffnung*, *Ein Stündlein wohl vor Tag*, *Er ist's*, *Nimmersatte Liebe*, *Fussreise*, *An eine Aeolsharfe*, *Verborgenheit*, *Auf einer*

Wanderung, *In der Frühe*, *Neue Liebe*, the two *Peregrina* songs, *Lebewohl*, *Heimweh*, *Denk' es, o Seele*, *Gesang Weylas*'; the humour of *Der Tambour*, *Storchenbotschaft*, *Auftrag*, *Abschied*. These things in their totality are as much beyond any other fifty-three of one man's songs in the quality and the variety of the life they touch as a book of sketches by Hokusai is beyond one by Raphael. One must not lay oneself open to misunderstanding. To realise the full force of Wolf's work is not to be blind to the value of the splendid heritage that Schubert has left us. All that is contended for here is the need of a revision of our standards of value now that we have the work of Wolf before us; and however Schubert may hold his own, as he unquestionably does, in a comparison of some of his features with those of Wolf, there are others the comparison of which is decidedly unfavourable to him.

The thirteen Eichendorff songs that Wolf wrote towards the end of 1888, in an interval of rest from the Mörike volume, show another side of his genius. Schumann had already set twelve of Eichendorff's lyrics in his "Liederkreis" (opus 39). They mostly deal with the more vaporous Eichendorff, the elegiac poet of the moonlight. Wolf touched upon this aspect of the poet in *Nachtzauber* (1887) and *Verschwiegene Liebe*, and to some extent in *Der Freund*, *Heimweh*, and *Das Ständchen*. In the other songs he threw into high relief by means of his music an aspect of Eichendorff that had hitherto been almost ignored by composers; in the first *Der Soldat* (1887), *Der Schreckenberger*, *Der Glücksritter*, *Lieber Alles*, *Der Scholar*, *Der verzweifelte Liebhaber*, and *Unfall*, the basis is humorous or ironic; in *Liebesglück* and *Seemanns Abschied* he fills the poems with a passion that no

musician had given to Eichendorff before. In the Goethe volume, which he wrote immediately after the Mörike, he again takes a whole world of human life within his grasp, —and a world differing from that of the Mörike and Eichendorff songs at every point. There is a new idiom now for even the simpler things, such as *Anakreons Grab*, *Frühling über's Jahr*, and *Phänomen*. It is a new kind of lovers' passion that he sings in lyrics like *Hochbeglückt in deiner Liebe* and *Komm, Liebchen, komm*. It is a new humour that we have in *Der Rattenfänger*, *Philine*, *Spottlied*, *Der neue Amadis*, *So lang' man nüchtern ist*; a new simplicity in the exquisite children's song *Epiphanias*; a new intoxication in the Bacchantic *Trunken müssen wir alle sein* and *Was in der Schenke waren heute*; while in the three songs with which the volume ends he touched his greatest height,—the delicately poetic *Ganymed*, the gravely philosophical *Grenzen der Menschheit*, that is like the cosmos brooding upon itself, and the stupendous *Prometheus*, the most powerful thing that ever came from Wolf's pen. It is songs like this that must have urged him to take up the composition of opera. *Prometheus* is a dramatic scene in miniature, with two characters clearly indicated, though only one of them speaks. The vengeful anger of Zeus is expressed in some hammering phrases that are like a man shaking a clenched fist that trembles with rage; intermingled with them is the deafening roar of his thunder. These two motives recur from time to time as Prometheus hurls his defiance and contempt at the head of the god, get weaker and weaker as the ardour of Prometheus increases, and after a final ineffectual attempt to assert themselves are swept away in the torrent of the Titan's hate and scorn.

Here and there in the *Spanisches Liederbuch* one has

the suspicion that Wolf works too rigidly upon the system of a single characteristic phrase in the piano,—notably in *Die du Gott gebarst, du Reine*, *Führ' mich, Kind, nach Bethlehem*, *Ach, wie lang' die Seele schlummert*, and *Herr, was trägt der Boden hier*. The object of this close adherence to one phrase that is modified from bar to bar seems to be to suggest, as has been already hinted, the obsession of the character's whole mind by one idea. The method succeeds to perfection in *Nun bin ich dein*, *Ach des Knaben Augen sind*, *Wunden trägst du, mein Geliebter*, and *Mühvoll komm' ich und beladen*,—the last-named being one of the most penetrating of Wolf's psychological studies; while the same plan gives pictorial and atmospheric unity to the tender little idyll *Nun wandre Maria*, and to the *Die ihr schwebet um diese Palmen*, where the air seems full of the gentle rustling of leaves above the head of the Virgin and the slumbering child. In these spiritual songs, and still more in the thirty-four secular songs of the volume, the general atmosphere is curiously Southern. Wolf never wrote anything more meridional in its passion than the great *Geh', Geliebter* with which the volume ends. There is the same soul-consuming ardour again in *Bitt' ihn, o Mutter*, *Ich fuhr' über Meer*, and *Wehe dir, die mir verstrickte meinen Geliebten*, all without a parallel in the earlier volumes; while there is the same truth of atmosphere in the songs of deep and grave emotion such as *Alle gingen, Herz, zur Ruh, Komm, o Tod, von Nacht umgeben*, and the profoundly moving *Tief in Herzen trag' ich Pein*; in the songs of delicate humour, such as *Seltsam ist Juanas Weise*, *Herz, verzage nicht geschwind*, and *Sagt, seid Ihr es, feiner Herr*; in tender little idylls like *In dem Schatten meiner Locken*; and in the exquisitely beautiful *Auf dem grünen Balkon*

and *Wenn du zu den Blumen gehst*, two songs of such sunny loveliness as almost to make us feel that Wolf could have safely challenged Schubert's supremacy in this particular field had he chosen to do so.

In the Italian songs there is again a change of manner, and though about five years elapsed between the composition of the first and the second set, the musical idiom is the same in both. For the most part these songs are very short, some of them running to no more than fifteen or twenty bars; but small as they are they are extraordinarily rich in emotion. Wolf's style is here in some respects at its finest; rarely in any of his other works does he attain such a union of concentrated thought and simplicity of manner. As we shall have occasion to remark again in connection with the opera *Manuel Venegas*, Wolf's style, instead of becoming more complex as he grew older, became strangely simple to all appearances at the same time that it allowed the most subtle and the most profound thoughts to be uttered through it. As a convenient example may be quoted the seventh song of the first set, *Der Mond hat eine schwere Klag' erhoben*, where with a mere handful of notes Wolf manages to say the most gravely beautiful things, while in the final couple of bars the music attains a poignancy of which we would hardly suspect so simple a phrase to be capable. There is the same inexplicable force in *Gesegnet sei durch den die Welt entstund*, where again the ending is an intuition of genius. "Blessed," says the lover, "be he who made the world; how excellently he has wrought in all things, making the sea with its deep and limitless flood, and the ships that float upon it, and Paradise with its eternal light,—making beauty also, and thy face." Every other composer, it is safe to say, would have made

the last line the climax of the whole song, both in colour and intensity; and we should never have known that there was a better way if the genius of Wolf had not revealed it to us. He begins *pianissimo* the enumeration of the things created, works up gradually through a *crescendo* to what we feel is going to be an overwhelming climax in the last line, allows the *crescendo* to extend even as far as the words "er schuf die," then suddenly hushes everything to *pianissimo* on the final words "Schönheit und dein Angesicht," the softening of the tone being all the more telling because the voice still rises in the scale. The effect is truly magical; it is as if the mystery of the beauty of the beloved's face filled the singer with a rapture beyond the power of words to express, striking him almost dumb with awe. Wolf must indeed have been thrilled by the simple little poem.

He seems, in fact, to have written the Italian songs in a mood of unusual seriousness; some of the poems are in themselves so exceedingly slight that we could hardly have imagined them being made to carry such a weight of musical expression as Wolf has laid upon them. He apparently approached them in a spirit of gravity so noble in itself that it dignified and ennobled the simplest thing it touched. Note, for example, the deep organ-tone of feeling that seems to throb and boom through a tiny lyric like *Was für ein Lied soll dir gesungen werden*, or the quiver of nervous concentration in such songs as *Du sagst mir dass ich keine Fürstin sei*, *Wohl kenn' ich Eueren Stand*, *Sterb' ich, so hüllt in Blumen meine Glieder*, *Wenn du, mein Liebster, steigst zum Himmel auf*, *Mir ward gesagt, du reisest in die Ferne*, and *Und willst du deinen Liebsten sterben sehen*. Wolf, with his intense earnestness, seems to be bent on proving to the poet that

there is more wisdom in his verses than he knew. Nothing is too trivial for him to lift to his own height; even upon such slight poetic themes as those of *Auch kleine Dinge* and *Gesegnet sei das Grün* he can build music that holds a world of emotion within its simple notes. The humour of the Italian songs is on the whole even finer-fingered than that of any of the earlier volumes; there is a peculiar quick-witted delicacy in songs like *Nein, junger Herr*, *Mein Liebster hat zu Tische mich geladen*, and *Ich hab' in Penna einen Liebsten wohnen*, while there is the same nimble grace and refinement in the songs of pure untroubled charm, such as *Mein Liebster ist so klein*, *Ihr jungen Leute*, *Heb' auf dein blondes Haupt*, and *Ein Ständchen Euch zu bringen*.

With the three Michelangelo songs—the last he wrote—his genius again transformed itself like an actor in a new part. "A sculptor must certainly sing bass," he said to one of his friends. The half-humorous remark lets us see the spirit in which the songs were conceived; for him the poems were not mere sonnets, but sonnets by Michelangelo, which made a great deal of difference. In the breadth and solidity of their phrases the songs seem carved out of marble. In the terrible *Alles endet was ensteket*, where Michelangelo gives voice to the profound pessimism that sometimes afflicted him, Wolf seems to open the very grave before our eyes and show us the corruption of the body; yet there is not a trace of the morbidity in the music that there is, for example, in the Harper's songs in the Goethe volume. There is gloom, indeed, but it is the gloom of the world-weary philosopher and artist, not that of the nervous semi-maniac of "Wilhelm Meister." Equally true to the psychology of the poet are the other two songs,—the marmoreal *Wohl*

denk' ich oft and the beautiful *Fühlt meine Seele*, where the throb of feeling is as profound as in anything Wolf ever wrote. What, we cannot help asking ourselves as we lay down this last of all his songs, what worlds of as yet unexplored emotion were there in the man? What magic and what beauty might he still not have given us had he lived?

CHAPTER II

THE MISCELLANEOUS WORKS

BESIDES the songs and the operas, Wolf left, as we have seen, a number of works in different *genres* that may be briefly considered here. Few of them show him at his very highest if we are to judge them by the best of the songs; but all have a certain distinction, and none is without significance in his total output. His choral works comprise the six spiritual songs for mixed voices *a cappella*,—*Aufblick*, *Einklang*, *Resignation*, *Letzte Bitte*, *Ergebung*, and *Erhebung*—which he wrote in 1881 to words by Eichendorff; the *Feuerreiter*, for mixed voice, chorus, and orchestra; the *Dem Vaterland*, for male chorus and orchestra; the *Christnacht*, for mixed chorus, orchestra, and soprano and tenor soli; and the *Elfenlied* (the words of which are taken from Shakespeare's "Midsummer Night's Dream") for female chorus, orchestra, and soprano solo.

The Eichendorff settings are of course very early works, and they show Wolf in that transitional stage that only ended with the composition of the Mörike songs about seven years later. His style is not yet made; his technique and his faculty of expression are not yet quite the equals of his imagination; but he takes the poems with his customary seriousness, and four of them at least are

extremely expressive. The part-writing is bold and free, now and then missing its mark slightly, as at the end of the first verse of *Ergebung*, but for the most part very effective. The best of the choruses are the intensely spiritual *Ergebung*, *Letzte Bitte*, and *Resignation*.[1]

The *Christnacht* is on the whole not a success, in spite of some fine moments. The poem, by Count von Platen, deals with the announcement to the shepherds, by the Angel of the Annunciation, of the birth of the Redeemer. There are solos for the Angel (soprano) and a shepherd (tenor), and contrasted choruses of shepherds and seraphim. Some of the writing admirably expresses the naïveté of the scene,—notably the melody of the shepherd, and the Styrian folk-tune with which the prelude opens, though this is hardly weighty enough for the development Wolf tries to give it. The chief defect of the work is the monotonous uniformity of gait in some of the vocal phrases,

[1] The choruses have been "edited" by Eugen Thomas, the conductor of a Vienna *a cappella* choir. Some of his suggestions for performance are valuable, coming as they do from a practised chorus trainer. Not content with offering these, however, he has taken it upon himself to indicate in many places what he thinks would be improvements on the original. The bulk of these proposed emendations are the merest critical impertinences. It needs only a cursory inspection of the passages in question to see that the notes Herr Thomas wishes to substitute would generally destroy the effect Wolf aimed at. It would be interesting to have had Wolf's opinion, in his own naked and unashamed language, upon the well-meant efforts of Herr Thomas to improve upon him. The English translations of the choruses, though generally good, are occasionally not as felicitous as they might be in suiting the new words to the music. The scores contain also an extraordinary error against which choral conductors who do not understand German should be warned. Herr Thomas has bracketed certain phrases, now in one voice, now in another, that should be made to stand out from the general tissue in order to get the best effect. "Die Klammern," so the note at the foot of the page runs, "deuten ein plastisches Hervorheben der Stellen an"; *i.e.*, "the brackets indicate that the passages included in them are to be made to stand out in high relief." This has been translated: "The passage in parenthesis should be rendered *very smoothly*"!

especially at the end, that seems all the more stiff and formal in contrast with the flexibility of phrasing that the songs exhibit. It is as hard to recognise the real Wolf in these square-toed melodies as it is to discover the Wagner of "Tristan" in the Wagner of the "Liebesmahl der Apostel," to the vocal style of which the *Christnacht* has some curious though certainly quite unconscious resemblances. There is a momentary grandeur in some of the pictures, but much in the finale that is meant to be grandiose is a little heavy and pedestrian.[1]

The other choral works show Wolf's choral writing at its best. The *Feuerreiter* is based on the ballad of the same name in the Mörike volume, which was clearly too big a conception for a single voice with pianoforte accompaniment. Not only do the orchestra and the choral masses give it the bigger volume of tone it seemed to call for, but the employment of the multiplied voices has suggested several new felicities to Wolf. The mere echoing of the phrases in the different parts, as well as the harmonisation of them independently of the orchestral accompaniment, serves to give them a greater driving force. An excellent new effect is made at the first occurrence of the words "Hinter'm Berg, hinter'm Berg,

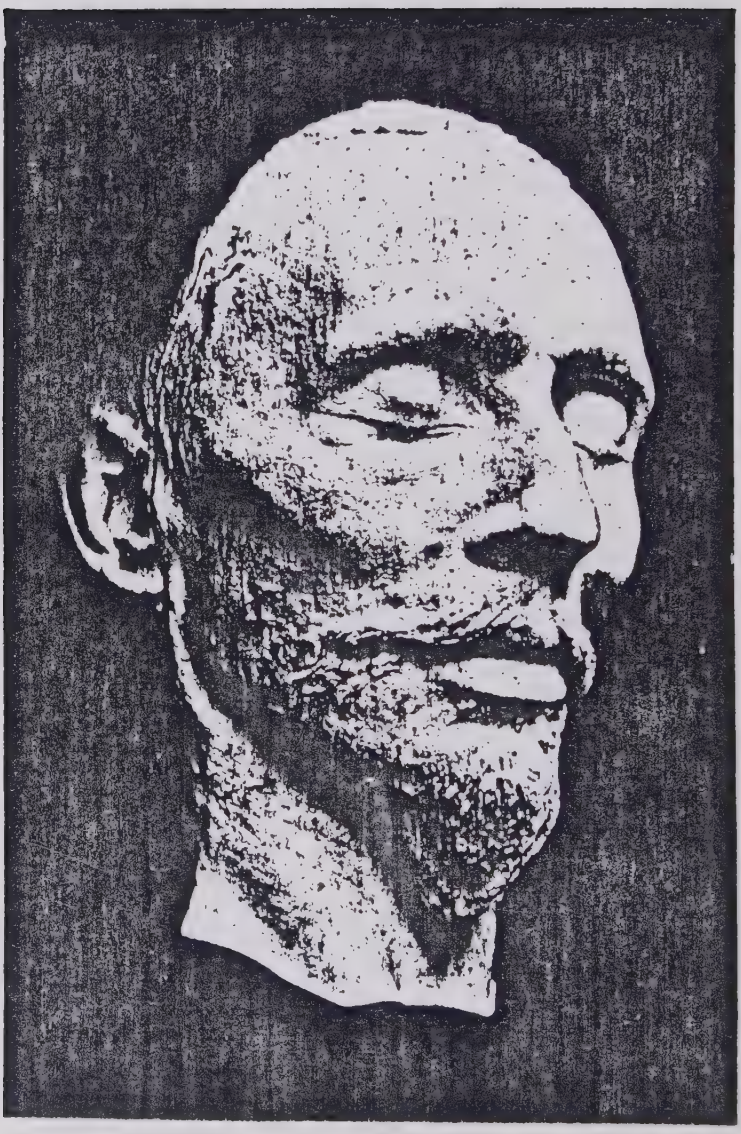
[1] There are one or two queer things in the English translation. The first verse of the poem runs thus—

Seraphim'sche Heere,
Schwingt das goldgefieder
Gott dem Herrn zur Ehre!

The translator turns this into—

Angel hosts of heaven,
Golden wings extending,
Sing *with joyful steven*;

which few but students of Anglo-Saxon will understand.



WOLF'S DEATH-MASK

brennt es in der Mühle," where the phrase that appears only once in the ballad is now first of all shouted wildly by the sopranos and contraltos, and then answered softly, as if from the distance, by the tenors and basses. The end, too, is much more impressive in the choral version than it is in the original ballad; the dark harmonies for the four voices suggest the atmosphere better than the single voice-part does, and the drum-taps in the closing bars sound very ghostly.

The *Vaterland* is a dignified and spirited piece of work; the part-writing is broad and very effective, while the independent melodic and harmonic treatment of the orchestra makes the total mass of tone singularly rich. The exquisite *Elfenlied* shows Wolf's genius on its lighter side; it is a delicate little picture of fairyland, done with the same keen enjoyment of the purely fantastic that we see in songs like *Nixe Binsefuss*, the *Lied vom Wind*, and the *Elfenlied* from the Mörike volume.

The incidental music to *Das Fest auf Solhaug* varies in quality, though it is perhaps a little indiscreet to judge it from the score alone; some parts of it may possibly be more effective when played along with the drama. Even away from the stage it is evident that movements like the fine orchestral introduction and chorus at the beginning of the second Act, the march and chorus in Act I, scene 12, and the fresh and fragrant chorus of girls and peasants in the last scene of the second Act, catch the true atmosphere of the scene. On the other hand Gudmund's second song (Act II, scene 8), which strikes one as being below Wolf's normal level purely as a song, might have a certain effective appropriateness on the stage. The finest movement of them all is the long and well-developed orchestral introduction to the third Act. This, however,

is a concert-piece obviously beyond the powers of the ordinary theatre band.

Of Wolf's purely instrumental work we possess only three specimens, the symphonic poem *Penthesilea*, the *Italienische Serenade*, and the string quartet in D minor. Knowing as we do the profound admiration Wolf had for Kleist, and how deeply the strangely beautiful drama of *Penthesilea*[1] had sunk into his very tissue, it is not easy to understand at first why he should have been relatively so unsuccessful in making a symphonic poem of it. The explanation is that in 1883 he had not found himself even in his own particular department of the song, and was still further from having learned to express the best that was in him in terms of the orchestra alone. Still there is plenty of fine stuff in the work. Wolf's Penthesilea is, after all, Kleist's beautiful and passionate heroine—large of limb, superbly built, a very queen of Amazons. In the middle section, again, depicting Penthesilea's dream of the Feast of Roses, there is some excellent writing—an admirable suggestion of the haze of the dream-atmosphere,

[1] Kleist's drama was published in 1808. The story of it is briefly this: While the Greeks and the Trojans are at war, the Amazons, under their queen Penthesilea, attack either force indifferently, their object being to capture prisoners whom they intend to wed at their Feast of Roses. Penthesilea dreams that she will conquer Achilles himself and lead him home a prisoner. In the combat between them, however, it is she who is overcome; but Achilles, when she recovers from her swoon, delicately refrains from disturbing her belief that she has been the victor. She soon learns the truth, but by this time Achilles has fallen deeply in love with her. He knows that at the Feast of Roses she can mate with no one but a captive she herself has made; he accordingly challenges her to a new contest, intending to allow himself to be defeated. Her maiden pride is wounded, however, and her love turned to hate; in her rage she allows her mastiffs to kill the hero, and then herself mutilates his body. Her reason returning to her, she slays herself.

Wolf's score, it should be added, has been touched up here and there by Hellmesberger to make the orchestration more effective.

with the vague thought floating and swaying uncertainly upon it. But as a whole the work is not a success. These set, regular, square-cut phrases and rhythms[1] seem hardly to have come from the same hand that both earlier and later on achieved such marvellous flexibility and variety of musical speech. Wolf was rarely at his very best except when he had a poem to work over line by line. When we compare the rather rigid idiom of the *Penthesilea* with the sinewy ease of style in the song *Die Spinnerin*, written four years earlier, we are inclined to think that the mere stimulus of a poetic subject was not enough for Wolf,—that his music needed, even more than Wagner's did, constant fertilisation by the actual word if it was to bear its richest fruit.

Yet it would be unwise to lay it down dogmatically that Wolf would never have been a first-rate writer of purely orchestral music, in face of what he has done in the string quartet in D minor, bearing a motto, "Entbehren sollst du, sollst entbehren," from Goethe's "Faust," and the Italian Serenade for small orchestra. The style of the quartet, which was mostly written in 1879, makes it all the harder to understand how the *Penthesilea* of four years later could show so many signs of immaturity. For the quartet is on the whole amazingly mature. It is only in the last movement that there are touches of boyish weakness; the theme in B flat (page 54 of the score) has a certain obviousness that is as a rule absent from all Wolf's work except the *Penthesilea*. The remainder of the quartet is simply incomprehensible as coming from a

[1] See, for example, pages 69 and 83 of the orchestral score. The latter passage is rather early-Wagnerian, not only in the melodic idea but in the use of a peculiarly monotonous rhythmic structure that we meet with incessantly in all Wagner's work up to "Lohengrin."

boy of nineteen who had had practically no teachers and no previous experience in composition. He seems to have taken as his starting-point the technique and the spirit of Beethoven's latest quartets. Such fire, such concentration of thought, such unforced and uncalculated complexity of musical style, are rare enough in the works of most musicians who have had years of practice in the writing of chamber music. We are no longer surprised at the tranquil ease with which Wolf can combine the most dissimilar vocal and instrumental melodies in the songs and operas, when we look at the boldness of imagination and the strength of wrist shown in this boyish quartet. Such a power at such an age is indeed almost uncanny. The mental strain involved in such complex and long-sustained cerebration must have been enormous; it is little wonder that a badly nourished nervous system, subject to such exhausting drains as this, should have ultimately collapsed.

The *Italienische Serenade* dates from 1893–94, and therefore falls within the period of Wolf's finest creative activity,—midway between the composition of the first and second volumes of the Italian songs, and just before he began work on *Der Corregidor*. It is a wholly beautiful little piece that should become popular when it is more fully known. Wolf had something of Nietzsche's aspiration towards the South, which meant for both of them sunlight and colour, wit, charm, and exhilaration of spirits. The Serenade has all the fine-nerved, delicate poetry of the Italian songs, with the added fragrance and warmth of atmosphere that the orchestral colouring gives.

CHAPTER III

THE OPERAS

THE plot of *The Corregidor* is founded on the novel "Il Sombrero de tres Picos" of the Spanish writer Pedro de Alarcon (1833–1891).[1] This in turn seems to be based on an old Spanish story,—one of the *joyeux devis* which have delighted the country people for centuries; it has been given a literary form by Alarcon and told with exceptional charm and delicacy of humour. In his version the story runs thus—

In a certain district of Andalusia, in the year 1804, there lived an honest miller, Tio[2] Lucas, and his wife Frasquita. He is humpbacked; she is extremely handsome. They are well-to-do, and keep open house to all the notabilities of the neighbourhood. It is suspected that many of the visitors come not so much for the sake of Tio Lucas's splendid grapes and melons as to see the beautiful Frasquita; she, however, is entirely devoted to

[1] Wolf, as we have seen, used the German translation—"Der Dreispitz"—published in Reclam's "Universalbibliothek." There is a good French translation—"Un Tricorne"—by Max Delegue, published in Marpon and Flammarion's cheap series of "Auteur célèbres." So far as I am aware there is no English version. Perhaps one or two of the details would be proscribed by our too prudish English taste.

[2] "Tio" is the equivalent of "uncle," and is applied not in the literal sense but in a purely affectionate way to any good fellow.

her husband. Among her admirers is the Corregidor,—the judge of the neighbouring town, Don Eugenio de Zuniga y Ponce de Leon, a man of fifty-five years of age, more humpbacked than Tio Lucas, decidedly repulsive in appearance, but still retaining all the passion for gallantry after most of the capacity for it has gone. He is of an aristocratic family and the most powerful person in the district. The three-cornered hat from which the story takes its title is the symbol of his power. He is married to a stately, refined lady, Mercedes by name, who cordially despises him, and whom he persistently neglects.

One day Lucas and Frasquita are in the garden of the mill when they see the Corregidor coming, long in advance of the other guests who are being expected. The miller and his wife guess the reason of this early visit, and it is arranged that Lucas shall conceal himself in a trellis of the vine arbour while Frasquita greets the Corregidor alone. Hearing that Lucas is enjoying his usual siesta, and is not likely to disturb them for some time, the Corregidor nervously opens the campaign against Frasquita. In reply to his promise to grant her any favour she may ask, she repeats an old request that he will cause her cousin to be nominated secretary to the mayor. He protests that it will be rather hard for him to discharge the present secretary, although he is a drunkard and a thief; but he is willing to make an effort in return for the promise of her favours. She fences dexterously with him as he proceeds to declare his love more and more passionately, until at length he tries to seize her bare arm in order to kiss it. She calmly extends the arm and overturns the Corregidor and his chair. As the judge picks himself up the voice of Tio Lucas is heard from the arbour, tranquilly asking what has happened. The Corregidor,

thinking that Lucas has seen everything, listens in silent rage while Frasquita tells her husband that his Excellency has fallen in trying to balance himself on his chair; Lucas, however, puts his mind at ease by thanking him for saving his life—he had dropped asleep, he says, and would certainly have fallen and been killed had not the noise of the Corregidor's accident awakened him. The judge swallows his anger and wounded pride, and finds an opportunity to whisper to Frasquita that it depends on herself whether he shall ultimately forgive the affront she has put upon him. The other visitors come and go, and the husband and wife are once more left alone.

The Corregidor goes home, confers with his artful rascal of a servant Garduna, and decides to act upon the plan the latter has conceived. He first of all makes out the paper giving Frasquita's cousin the desired appointment. Then he writes an order to the alcalde of the district, ordering him to arrest the miller, take him from the mill to the alcalde's house, and detain him there all night. Garduna goes off on this errand, while the Corregidor tells his servants to inform his lady that he will be detained from home that night on important business connected with his office—a secret expedition to surprise some desperate criminals. Then he sets off for the mill.

Lucas and Frasquita are seated in their kitchen in the evening, conversing affectionately, when they are astonished by a loud knocking at the door. Opening it, they see Tonuelo, the officer of the alcalde. He enters and informs them that he has been ordered to take Lucas into custody and bring him before the alcalde. Lucas offers to go next morning with pleasure, but is told that he must set off at once with Tonuelo. Thereupon

Frasquita insists on going with her husband; Tonuelo, however, informs her that his instructions are to take away Lucas, and Lucas only. Both the miller and his wife now begin to have their suspicions; but they part without giving voice to them, Lucas simply telling Frasquita to bolt and bar the door and not admit anyone else that night. Then he saddles a mule and goes off with Tonuelo. When he reaches the alcalde's house he inquires the reason of the command he has received. The alcalde assures him that it is nothing serious, and that the business can very well wait until morning. Reflecting upon it all, Lucas begins to see more and more completely the meaning of his hasty removal from his own house. Adopting a very friendly tone, however, with the alcalde and his bibulous friends—the secretary and the sacristan—Lucas declines to have the lady of the house disturbed in order to prepare a bed for him; he will, he says, sleep quite comfortably for one night on the straw in the loft. Completely deceived by his acting of the good-natured innocent, and wishing success to the Corregidor, the alcalde and Tonuelo retire to their couches, Lucas also going placidly to his. He soon sees that the window is low enough to allow of his leaping through it. He makes his way to the stable, takes out his mule, and sets off as rapidly as possible back to his house,—but across the fields instead of by the high-road,—thinking all the while, with the faintest shade of suspicion in his thoughts, of Frasquita and the Corregidor.

When he has gone some distance he hears the sound of another beast's footsteps in the road. His mule also hears it and sets up a discordant bray of salutation, much to the miller's annoyance. The mule in the road returns the greeting; but Lucas hastens on as fast as possible,

surprised but relieved to find that the person on the other mule is equally anxious to get away from him. So he makes his way to the mill, fighting down the mournful thoughts against the fidelity of Frasquita that will persist in coming unbidden into his head. He arrives at length at his mill, and is astonished to find the outer door open,—the door he had heard his wife bolt and bar on his departure with Tonuelo. It could not, then, have been opened from the outside, or by anyone but his wife.

With the doubts crowding in upon his poor brain, he crosses the courtyard leading to the house; to his amazement he finds the house-door open also. He comes to the kitchen. There is no one in it, but there is a blazing fire in the grate which he knew not to be there when he left. A lamp is lit, enabling him to see some garments lying on the chairs. He examines them, and to his horror finds them to be the three-cornered hat, the scarlet cape, and the rest of the well-known habiliments of the Corregidor. Greatly disturbed, but still unwilling to believe even this evidence, his eye falls on a piece of paper lying on the table. He reads it; it is the appointment of Frasquita's cousin as secretary to the mayor; and now the poor man can hardly doubt what has happened. He cautiously ascends the stairs and pauses outside his bedroom. All is still at first; then he hears a sound that is thoroughly familiar to him —the cough of the asthmatical Corregidor. It is impossible for him now not to believe the worst; and when by peeping through the keyhole he can just see a small part of the pillow of the bed, and on the pillow the head of the Corregidor, the load of his misfortunes is quite complete. He keeps cool, however, by a masterful

effort, descends the stairs very quietly, reaches the kitchen, and sits down to think the situation out in all its bearings.

He rejects his first impulse to shoot the Corregidor, as that would only lead to his being hung, while everyone's sympathies would be with the beautiful Frasquita and against her plain, humpbacked husband. Whatever revenge he takes, he must be sure that the ridicule will fall on the offenders, not on him. Then a wonderful idea flashes through his brain and he gives a Mephistophelean laugh. He takes off his own clothes, rapidly dons those of the Corregidor, and sets off towards the town, imitating to the life his rival's walk, and murmuring blandly to himself, time after time, "The Corregidor's wife,—*she's* pretty, too!"

But what had happened at the mill after the departure of Lucas with Tonuelo to the alcalde's house? Frasquita, who has resolved to sit up until her husband returned, has been knitting in her bedroom for about an hour when she is startled by a frantic cry for help outside. Fearing that it comes from Lucas, she opens a door leading from the bedroom to the barrier of a canal that ran past the mill. She is astonished to see the Corregidor, dripping with wet; he has mistaken his way in the dark and fallen into the canal. In spite of her anger she has to yield to the wretched man's entreaties to let him enter the house; he tries to pacify her by showing her the paper of her cousin's nomination, and finding this of no use threatens her with a pistol, whereupon she checkmates him by pointing Lucas's gun at his head. He places the paper on the table,—for Frasquita refuses to touch it,—and, as he is now trembling with cold, he implores permission to get out of his wet clothes and

into bed as the only means of saving his life. The faithful Garduna comes in response to a call, undresses his miserable master, puts him in the miller's bed, and lays his clothes out in the kitchen to dry. Meanwhile the indignant Frasquita has saddled a mule and gone off in search of Lucas, putting Garduna off the scent, however, by saying that she is going to the town for a doctor for the Corregidor. The news of this gives the wretched Don Eugenio another shock. He does not doubt that Frasquita has really gone to the town, but is convinced that her object is to see his wife and tell her everything; and he implores Garduna to run as quickly as he can, get there before Frasquita, and prevent her from entering his house.

Frasquita is flying along the high-road to the alcalde's when she hears an ass bray. Her own beast replies in the same style. [This is, of course, the other side of the incident told in the story of Lucas's ride. The husband and wife were, without knowing it, passing each other in the dark. It is one of the neat little piquancies of which the well-planned story is full.] Frasquita hurries on and reaches the alcalde's house about eleven o'clock; the only result of her insisting on seeing Lucas is the discovery that he has flown. She guesses that he has made off to the mill, and frightens herself and the others with the idea that Lucas will kill the Corregidor immediately he sees him. The alcalde, Tonuelo, and Frasquita accordingly go back to the mill with all speed.

Garduna, when he arrives at the Corregidor's house, is relieved to find that Donna Mercedes has retired for the night and that no other woman has entered; he gives strict orders that no one is to be admitted, and

then returns to his master, passing Lucas on the way without seeing him. The Corregidor is consoled to hear that Frasquita has not been to the town, and sends Garduna for his clothes in order that he may return home. He has, of course, to dress in those of Lucas, his own being gone. The alcalde and the others enter, and Tonuelo, seeing a man whom he takes to be the miller, throws himself upon him and handles him very severely. Explanations follow; the enraged Corregidor, after having been first half-drowned and then beaten, has now to hurry to the town, with the alcalde, Tonuelo, Garduna, and Frasquita, to frustrate the obvious plan of the miller for penetrating into Don Eugenio's house as the Corregidor and paying that worthy back in his own coin. They reach the house, and find the door closed and all quiet. The servants are at last roused. They ask the name of the person who thus disturbs the quiet of the night. To the reply that it is the Corregidor they answer that the Corregidor came home an hour ago and at once went to bed. Frasquita's heart sinks. As the Corregidor will not go away, the servants pour out of the house and beat him severely, until a majestic voice is heard asking the meaning of the tumult. It is that of Don Eugenio's wife. She orders the servants to admit the rowdy peasants, as she styles them. In the house she affects not to know the Corregidor, whom she calls Tio Lucas, and assures him that the Corregidor is abed. Having thoroughly humbled her husband before everyone, she sends for the real Lucas, who comes in clothed in the Corregidor's garments. (He had been detected entering the house, and brought before the lady as a would-be thief. He had told her his story, and the two had then laid their plans for the humiliation of the

Corregidor.) When the comedy has been played long enough at the expense of Don Eugenio, complete explanations are given. Lucas and Frasquita, ashamed of having suspected each other, go home happier than ever, while the Corregidor's wife withers him with a few final words of scorn.

It is a joyous old story, full of interesting situations and humorous surprises, and delightfully told by Alarcon. Wolf's librettist made a fairly good piece of operatic work out of it, though the action has to be somewhat compressed for the stage,—since music requires a minimum of incident if it is to have room for its own full development,—and some of the piquancy of the original has necessarily to be sacrificed. The opera is in four Acts. In the first, we have a short duet between Lucas and Frasquita in which they sing of their happiness in each other's love, the visit of the Corregidor, the hiding of Lucas in the arbour, the amorous declaration of Don Eugenio, his fall, the reappearance of the miller, and the visit of the bishop and other notabilities. (Garduna, the Corregidor's servant, is changed into Repela, and his character is altered somewhat by the librettist.) The second Act shows the husband and wife in the mill at night, the advent of Tonuelo, the departure of Lucas, the appearance of the Corregidor after his ducking in the canal, and the departure of Frasquita in search of her husband, while Don Eugenio, having hung his clothes up to dry, retires to bed to try to restore his circulation.

There is then an orchestral interlude while the scene changes to the alcalde's house, where we see the alcalde drinking with his secretary Pedro. Lucas and Tonuelo enter. Lucas grasps the situation and offers to sing a

drinking-song, the point of which is that the glasses must be emptied each time the words "Spanish wine" occur. This happens in almost every line. Pedro and the alcalde religiously drink every time while Lucas only feigns to do so; he pretends to be drunk, however, falls down as if asleep, and the alcalde, Pedro, Tonuelo and Manuela (the maid) stagger off to their beds singing a tipsy song of triumph (in canon) over the defeated miller. Lucas at once leaves by the window. His flight is discovered by Manuela, who has come back to ask him to take her from the alcalde's service into his. She rouses the others, and they pull themselves together sufficiently to follow the fugitive.

The third Act opens with a scene that makes a rather weak stage version of one of the best incidents of the story. The stage shows a piece of hilly land traversed by a road low down in the foreground and another in the background, higher up the hill, the two being united by a path. It is a cloudy night, the moon sometimes piercing through the clouds. Frasquita comes down the path from above and listens nervously to the sounds around her; she hears steps, but cannot see that Lucas is passing by along the upper road. Repela comes along the same road as Frasquita and tries to turn her from her purpose, which she now avows, of going to the alcalde's house to find her husband. There is another long orchestral interlude, during which the scene changes to the kitchen in the mill, as at the beginning of the second Act. The Corregidor's clothes are hanging in front of the fire. Lucas enters, notices the garments and the paper on the table, looks through the keyhole and sees the Corregidor's head on the pillow, grasps his gun, then laments that if he kills the pair the neighbours

will only laugh at the poor humpbacked man who married the beautiful wife, tries to find a better mode of vengeance, thinks of the Corregidor's wife and takes the Corregidor's clothes, turns to the door of the sleeping-room, shakes his hand threateningly, and departs. Then the Corregidor comes out in night-cap and night-dress for his clothes. The remainder of the Act follows the lines of the story—Don Eugenio puts on Lucas's clothes, is taken for Lucas by the alcalde and Tonuelo and severely trounced before he can make his identity known, and finally everyone makes off to the town to frustrate, if possible, the too-evident design of the offended miller.

The opening scene of the fourth Act shows the street in front of the Corregidor's house. The night-watchman goes by, calling the hour—half-past five. Then everything follows as in the novel; the proper explanations are made, and the opera ends with a chorus in honour of the virtuous and noble Donna Mercedes.

We have seen how ardently Wolf desired to become an opera composer. Was his belief in his mission for the theatre well founded? The answer must be at once Yes and No. His songs alone are sufficient to show that he possessed in abundance many of the special gifts for opera —a rich poetic sense, striking powers of human delineation in music, and the faculty of tracking a character through all the metamorphoses of its soul-states. If the action of musical drama meant no more than is instanced in ballads like the *Feuerreiter* or *Prometheus*, then Wolf had more aptitude for that career than ninety-nine good musicians out of a hundred. But, as he was to find to his cost, a stage drama is not quite the same thing as a chamber drama. Mixed with everything that is meant for the stage there must be a certain coarseness, a certain

thickness of effect. Just as theatrical scene-painting, because it has to act upon the eyes of a thousand people who view it under certain specialised conditions, has to make use of conventions in order to attain its aim that would be out of place in a picture intended for a wall, so the dramatist has to work within conditions laid down for him in the first place by the nature of his audience and in the second place by the nature of the building. He is addressing not reflective individuals in their own homes but a crowd; and the theatrical crowd, like the political, has a psychology that is something different from the psychology of the single man,—slightly cruder, not so much the unfettered expression of himself alone as the average of his own self and those of his neighbours. And not only has the dramatist to appeal to this average human organism, but, having accepted the limitations of the stage, he has to see that his diction, his pictures and his general plan conform to the peculiar conditions the stage lays down for him. He can no more draw with the finest of pencils than the scenic artist can paint with the finest of brushes. He *has* to be "theatrical,"—to think, for example, of the mere stage effectiveness of entries and exits and a thousand other things that interest the more or less childlike eye of the theatre audience.

The "sense of the stage," in fact, is as real and distinct a gift as the sense for colour, or for melody, or for harmony; and a musician may have every other qualification for opera and still lack this. Tchaikovski, who, like Wolf, had to learn by experience the necessity of subordinating the musician in him to the dramaturgist, often raged over the way in which the two persisted in tugging him in contrary directions. In "Eugen Onegin" he wrote as a chamber dramatist, pursuing with delight the finest

threads of characterisation, but forgetting how it would all look when seen on the stage instead of being read at home. "Opera style should be broad, simple, and decorative," he says in one of his letters. The musician writing for the stage must think of his "effects"; yet he turns with a shudder from the "effects" of born theatrical writers like Verdi and Wagner, that seem to be almost impudently calculated to work on the perennial naïveté of the theatrical public. But despair as he will of acquiring the trick of the stage, he sees clearly enough that no stage success is possible without it. In a letter to Frau von Meck of 9th December 1879 he writes: "My 'Voyevode' is undoubtedly a very poor opera. I do not speak of the music only, but of all that goes to the making of a good opera. The subject is lacking in dramatic interest and movement. . . . I wrote music to the words without troubling to consider the difference between operatic and symphonic style. In composing an opera the stage should be the musician's first thought; he must not abuse the confidence of the theatre-goer who comes *to see* as well as *to hear*. Finally, the style of music written for the stage should be the same as the decorative style in painting—clear, simple, and highly-coloured. A picture by Meissonier would lose half its charm if exhibited on the stage; and subtle, delicately harmonised music would be equally inappropriate, since the public demands sharply defined melodies on a background of subdued harmony. In my 'Voyevode' I have been chiefly concerned with filigree work, and have forgotten the requirements of the stage. The stage often paralyses a composer's inspiration; that is why symphonic and chamber music are so far superior to opera. A symphony or sonata imposes no limitations; but in opera,

the first necessity is to speak the musical language of the great public."[1]

With some qualifications, these words accurately describe the one defect that prevents *Der Corregidor* from being a stage work of the first order. The fault lies partly with him, partly with his librettist; now one of them, now the other, has failed to keep the stage and the audience in view, and Wolf in his music has not always "spoken the musical language of the great public,"—he has sometimes painted with too fine a brush. Working upon a novel that in itself is excellently constructed, he did not always recognise that the same construction might not be equally admirable on the stage. A theatrical Act cannot safely end like a chapter in a novel; its finish must be something more decisive. Had Wolf remembered this, he would have planned a different finale to the first Act of the opera. After the scene between Frasquita, the Corregidor, and Lucas, the bishop and the other guests arrive to the sound of imposing processional music. The final stage directions are "Here the bishop and his retinue come into the foreground. Greetings between him and the Corregidor. At the side, in the foreground, are the musicians. Lucas and Frasquita do the honours." That is all; the music peals out gorgeously on the stage and in the orchestra, and the curtain falls. One does not need to see the scene on the

[1] In other letters he returns to the same point. "I think . . . I shall never again compose an opera. I do not say, with you and many others, that opera is an inferior form of musical art. On the contrary, uniting as it does so many elements which all serve the same end, it is perhaps the richest of musical forms. I think, however, that personally I am more inclined to symphonic music; at least I feel more free and independent when I have not to submit to the requirements and conditions of the stage." (15th Nov. 1882.) See also his letter of 10th Oct. 1883. My quotations are made from Mrs. Newmarch's admirable translation.

stage to realise how ineffective the "curtain" is. There is theatrical weakness, again, in the scene where Lucas and Frasquita pass each other in the night, the one making for the mill, the other for the alcalde's house; and at other points the terseness and neatness of the interlocked intrigue of the novel are not equally well reproduced on the stage.

On the musical side, moreover, it must be admitted that Wolf has not always been able to forget that he was a song-writer. The anecdote has already been told that when his approval was asked, at rehearsal, of an alteration in the setting of a certain scene, it turned out that he had never noticed the change. He no doubt worked at the whole opera as he would have done at a large song, visualising the scenes and the characters as he would have done there, but not thinking of the special kind of atmosphere that would surround them as soon as they stepped on the stage. The thought of altering the fourth Act, at the suggestion of some of his more experienced friends, was unpleasant to him because it meant sacrificing so much lovely music. To him, indeed, as to Tchaikovski, an opera meant in the first place music; and though to give us too much music and music of too finely wrought a quality is a fault of the better kind, it is still a fault from the point of view of the theatre. He certainly gives us too much music; the orchestra scarcely ceases playing for a moment from the first bar of the prelude to the last bar of the finale. It gives no impression of musical monotony, for Wolf's invention is too copious and too varied for that; but it undoubtedly tricks the stage and the actors out of some of their rights. Seeing his picture inwardly rather than outwardly, Wolf now and then obviously misses the plainest opportunity for telling scenic effect. An instance

cited by Dr. Decsey perhaps shows this most clearly. After Tio Lucas has left the mill, Frasquita sits by the hearth, absently spinning and thinking of her husband. At length she begins to sing a ballad, "Auf Zamora geht der Feldzug," in order to occupy her mind. At the tenth line she is interrupted by the cry of terror of the Corregidor, who has fallen into the canal. Here, one thinks, any dramatic composer would have stopped the music accompanying the stage action, and so secured the nervous effect upon the audience of the sudden shriek of the Corregidor for help. Wolf, however, does not allow the orchestra to stop. He handles it just as he would have handled the piano in a similar episode in a song. Maintaining the rhythmic figure with which he has been accompanying the ballad, he just varies its colour and accelerates its pace, thus conveying indeed a real sense of the excitement of the scene, but not the true stage sense of it.

But when all deductions of this kind have been made from *Der Corregidor* as an opera,[1] it remains, as music, one of the most purely delightful works of the nineteenth century. In many ways it sets us thinking of "Die Meistersinger"; not because of any actual imitation of Wagner's opera, but because it has the same unending flow of melody, the same clearness of character-drawing, the same high and genial spirits, the same breadth and tenderness in the handling. As music it constantly shows Wolf at his best. It was only to be expected that the

[1] Some of the German critics have pointed out that the atmosphere of the work is not prevailingly comic, the note being decidedly serious at times, while in the scene where Lucas, in the kitchen of the mill, begins to suspect his wife's fidelity, the music touches quite tragic depths. The objection, however, is more academic than vital.

creator of so many human types in his songs should limn every character of the opera with infallible precision; even the gabble of the servants in the final scene is at once exquisitely true to life and deliciously musical. The Corregidor, the man of pride and power and contempt for the rights of others, dominates the musical tissue, as he does the story, with his brazen theme—

But this is only one side of his character. In his moments of love-making the dignity of birth and office go out of the Corregidor, leaving only the primal sensuality of the man. And there is something middle-aged in the love-music he sings to Frasquita, particularly in the passage commencing

"Aber wenn dein Blick, Frasquita,
Feuersprühend auf mir ruht,"

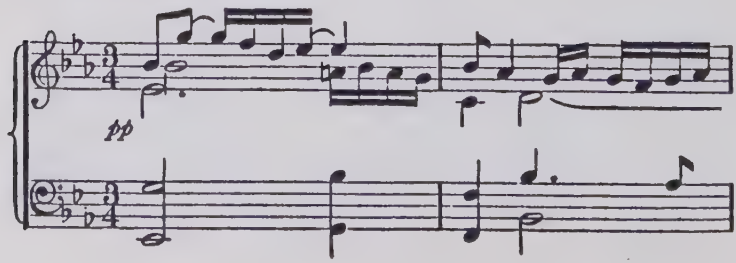
where one element of the music belies the other, the ardent melody having a curiously expressive after-strain that suggests the semi-senile, eager reaching-out of the trembling hands to clutch the object of its desire.

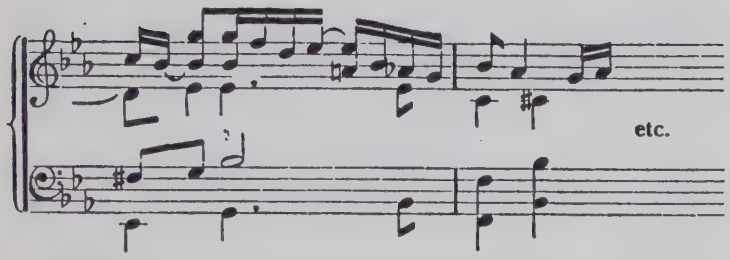
Contrasted with the Corregidor is Tio Lucas, who has

no well-defined theme attached to him, but is always characterised by a figure in the bass—

that brings up before our eyes the honest, stoutly-built, solidly-poised miller, going firmly upon the earth in his healthy rustic manner. It is evident that this theme will easily combine contrapuntally with that of the Corregidor, and in this way Wolf achieves many a fine stroke of psychological byplay in the orchestra. Particularly sly are some of the transformations of the two themes during the scene in the kitchen, especially when the miller and the Corregidor don each other's clothes. When Lucas is leaving the mill, convinced of his wife's unfaithfulness, he turns round and shakes his fist threateningly at the closed door of the sleeping-room, and his easy-going theme then becomes transformed into one significantly heavy, sullen and sinister.

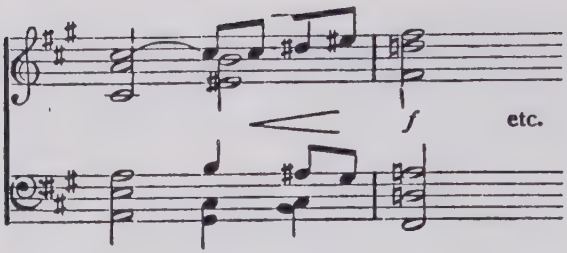
Frasquita is mainly associated with a beautiful theme that may also be held to symbolise the happiness of the loving wife and husband—





This is put to the most exquisite uses, particularly in the second scene of the first Act, where Lucas and Frasquita embrace each other after an affectionate little colloquy. It is a singularly beautiful passage, passionate, tender, moving and heart-easing all in one. And the fine truth of Wolf's characterisation here should be noted. For the love-making is not that of lovers but of man and wife, each long assured of the other's heart; and the music, even in its most ardent moments, is bathed in this atmosphere of content and blissful certainty. We see the unerring psychologist and the faultless craftsman of the songs at work again.

Equally veracious is the portraiture in the case of each of the other characters. The stately and noble-minded Donna Mercedes is drawn in a phrase that suggests both her physical and her mental dignity—



The alcalde, Tonuelo, Repela, the alcalde's secretary, and even the servant-girl Manuela are all drawn with Wolf's customary clearness of outline.

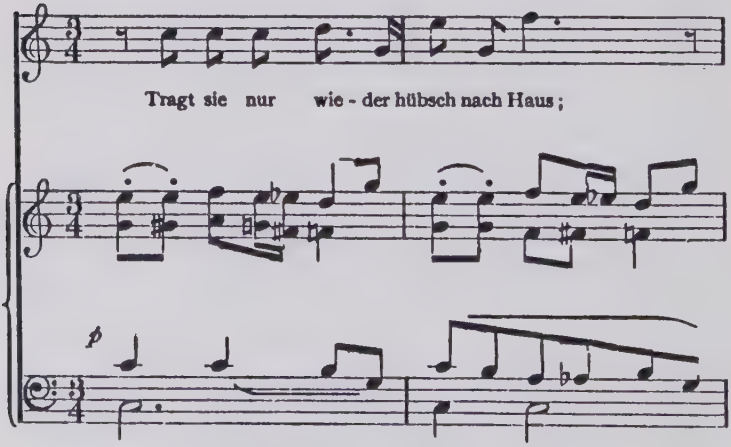
As in the songs, he shows inexhaustible fertility in the varying of his themes to express a change of psychology or situation. The flippant fandango that Frasquita dances in the first Act, to tease the amorous Corregidor, becomes a very mournful thing in the second Act, when Frasquita, after the departure of Lucas to the alcalde's, reflects that it is her thoughtlessness that has led to his arrest. As she sits alone and resolves to await his return without sleeping, the heavily-treading theme of Lucas is metamorphosed in the orchestra into something very affectionate and tender. The great scene of Lucas alone in the kitchen, racked with the thought that his wife and the Corregidor are in the inner room,—a masterly, sustained piece of writing,—is full of the most significant transformations of the earlier rosy themes into doubtful grey and angry purple. In things like this Wolf cedes place to no man, not even to Wagner himself. At the commencement of the first Act an officious neighbour throws out a hint that Lucas's visitors come less for the miller's grapes than to see the fascinating Frasquita. Lucas turns it all aside with a breezy, confident laugh; but when, convinced of his wife's frailty, he begins to think out a plan for vengeance, this

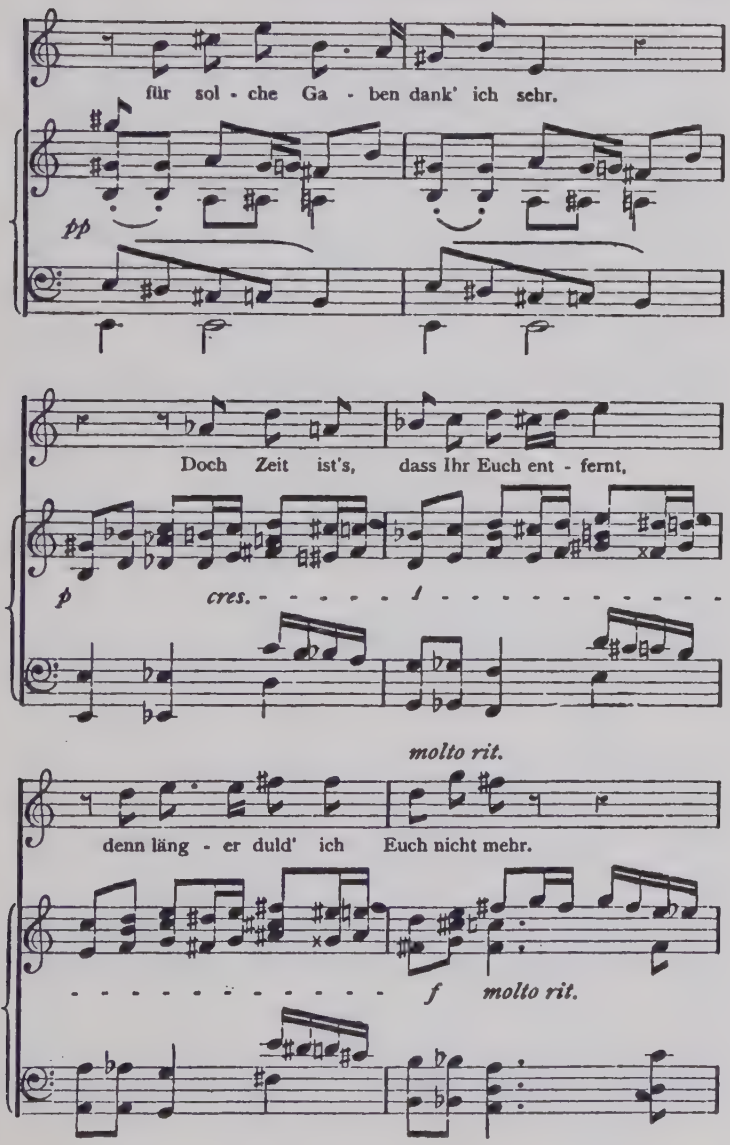
long-past theme comes out again in the orchestra, but transformed into the bitterest laughter as the unhappy man imagines he hears the jeers of his associates; underneath it is the theme of Lucas himself, with a pathetic stumble in each phrase, as if the world were pointing in cruel amusement to the poor hunchback who had dared to marry so beautiful a wife. The score is full of felicities of this kind.

The vocal writing is, if anything, freer than that of the songs. Here, as there, he manages to combine melodic interest with the most telling justness of phrasing and accentuation. The melodic line has all the beauty of music and all the ease of natural speech. So veracious is it that at times one can see, as one plays through the score at the piano, the very gestures and facial expression of the singers. Let anyone examine for himself, as an example, the short passage in Lucas's monologue on page 136 of the score, in which he laments that he is betrayed and dishonoured, but that if he kills the guilty pair the thoughtless crowd around him will but sneer at him. As in the songs, every word falls into its right place; the verbal phrase rises and drops or flashes out on a particular word just as an actor speaking the lines would make it do. You can see the man's head drop upon his breast as he admits, like a beaten fighter, that his honour has gone; you can see the spurt of crimson rage in him as he thinks of killing the pair, and the instantaneous quenching of the fire; then the wild revolt, with hands clenched and raised in protest, against the brutal laughter of the world.

So full is Wolf of music, too, that he pours it out in abundance where other men would probably content themselves with conventional pseudo-dramatic declama-

tion. Look, for instance, at a passage in Frasquita's dialogue with the Corregidor, after he has obtained entrance to the mill during Lucas's absence. He tries to appease her by giving her the paper containing the nomination of her cousin to the post she had asked for him. "Take it away," she says; "I thank you for such a gift, but it is now time for you to go, for no longer can I endure your presence here." Instead of letting Frasquita fling the words at the Corregidor's head over an inexpressive chord or two in the orchestra, in the bare theatrical style, Wolf fills the whole passage with music. He starts with the theme always associated with the nomination, and works it up symphonically, thus at the same time captivating the purely musical ear with the metamorphoses the theme undergoes, and making these metamorphoses express the greater and greater urgency in Frasquita's manner—




für sol - che Ga - ben dank' ich sehr.
pp
Doch Zeit ist's, dass Ihr Euch ent - fernt,
p
cres.
f
molto rit.
denn läng - er duld' ich Euch nicht mehr.
f
molto rit.

But the finest examples of the richness of the score in pure music, and of Wolf's uncommon art in blending the vocal part with the orchestral, may be seen in his treatment of the typical Frasquita theme. A couple of examples must suffice. When Tonuelo hands Lucas the order for his arrest, Frasquita runs to him with a light and asks to be allowed to read it with him. Lucas turns towards her affectionately, with the words "You golden heart's treasure!" Note the combination of Lucas's

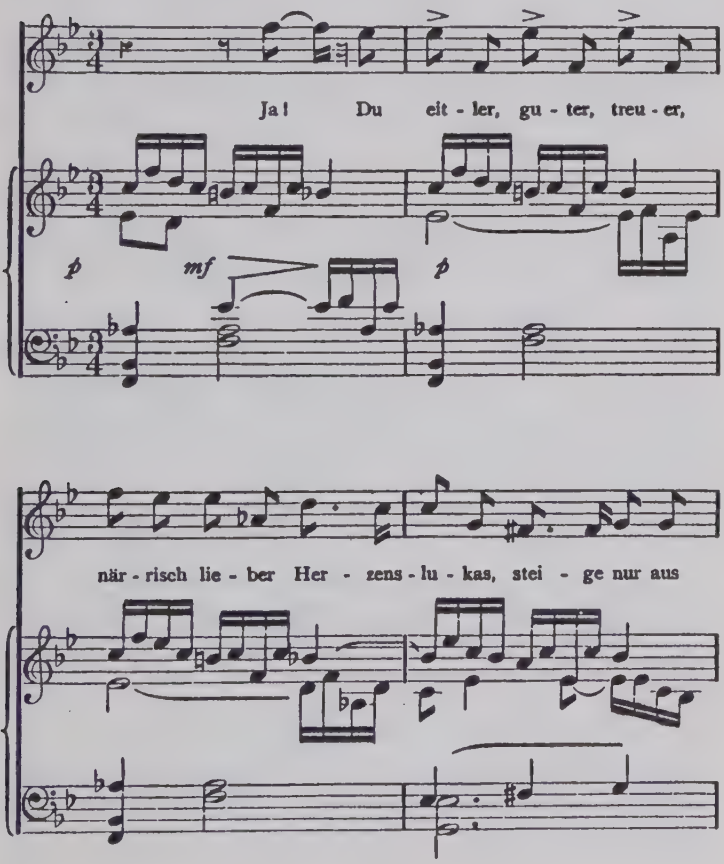
HUGO WOLF

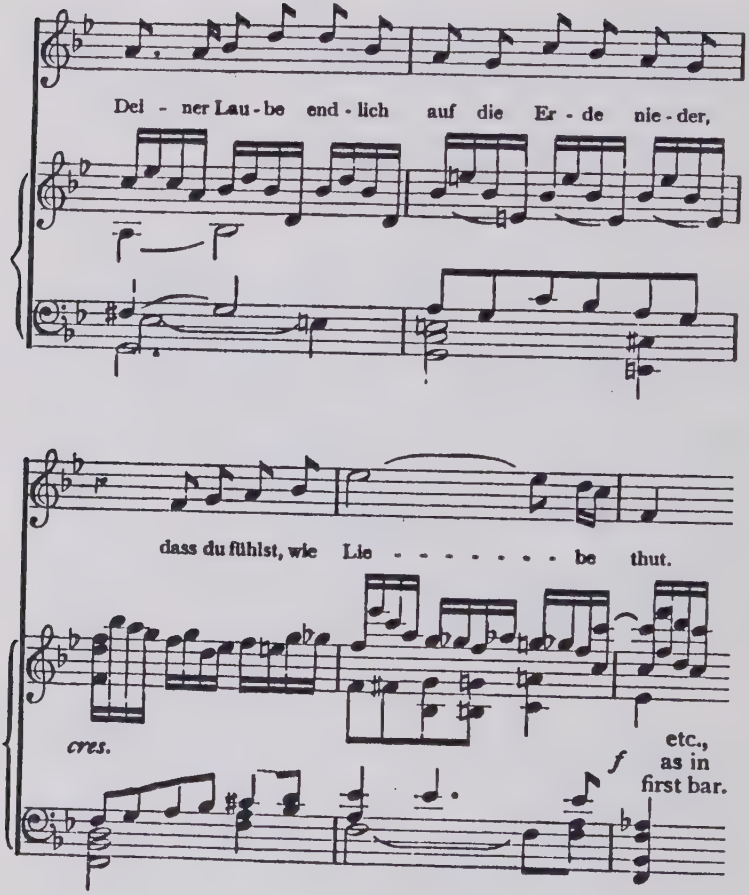
theme in the bass with the tender Frasquita's theme above, and the simple expressiveness of the vocal writing,—the heartfelt sincerity of Lucas's few words, and the charming blend of curiosity, anxiety and affection in the request of Frasquita.

There is not space to dwell upon many other instances in which a different verbal stratum is superimposed upon the same theme in the orchestra, and always in such a way as to bring out the peculiar pregnancy of the words in each case; but a quotation may be made from the final scene of the opera, where, after full explanation of the comedy of errors, husband and wife fall into each other's arms—

The vocal parts fit so aptly into each other and into the orchestral tissue that we do not at first notice the perfect naturalness of the verbal phrasing. In Frasquita's part, for example, observe first of all the justness of the sudden impulsive cry on the high A as she pronounces her husband's name; then, after the voice has descended from this point, the rise again on the word "sweet," the still greater rise on the "new" in the words "I have newly won you," and again the prolongation on the "have,"—only little points, it may be said when one calls attention to them, but just the points that matter, just the points that make the difference between good vocal writing and bad. It seems so easy because Wolf has done it so well; the true measure of its excellence, both in his songs and his operas, may be had by comparing his style with that of other men who have aimed at combining vocal and

instrumental counterpoints. Where in all operatic literature, we may ask, can we find such exquisite freedom of lyric speech, united with such independence in the accompaniment, as on pages 11–13 of *Der Corregidor*, of which the following fragment from Frasquita's part may serve as an example—





One might go on for ever analysing the opera in this way, pointing out its many felicities of phrase, of characterisation, of atmosphere. Whatever slight shortcomings it may have as a piece of stagecraft, it is to the musician at home a perpetual feast of the purest joy.

There is no other opera since "Die Meistersinger" that can create in him so strong a feeling of love.[1]

The libretto of *Manuel Venegas* is founded on Alarcon's "El niño de la bola." Wolf, as we have seen, did not get any further with the composition than the first fifty pages or so. These have been published, together with the text of a drama by Dr. Moritz Hoernes on the subject,—not the actual text that Wolf was setting, but a version designed to stand on its own feet as poetry, and therefore necessarily differing from one that would be supported and modified by music. A summary of the drama, however, will give an idea of the opera at which Wolf was working.

The scene is laid in a small town in southern Spain; the action takes place in two days in the eighteen-forties. The scene of the first Act is in a street in front of the church of Santa Maria de la Cabeza. In the background is the church portal, approached by broad steps. On the left is a tavern; on the right a house with a balcony, communicating by means of steps with the street. It is a bright spring morning; preparations are being made for the procession of the Infant Jesus, and the houses are decorated. Out of the tavern come Morisco, a mule-driver, and Vitriolo, an apothecary. Morisco has been treating his companion royally; he is now the servant of someone whose name he does not know, but who, he tells Vitriolo, is clearly possessed of boundless wealth. The stranger is travelling through Spain, and has just reached the little town in which the scene of the drama is laid.

[1] It is greatly to be desired that the work will be soon issued with an English translation—an adequate one, of course, in which the most scrupulous care will be taken not only to render the poetic sense but to preserve the felicity of the correspondence between each word and the note that Wolf sets to it.

Vitriolo remarks that he has come at a good time; the town is *en fête*, and to-morrow there will be universal dancing,—such dancing as was never seen before. Once a year, it seems, the whole population repairs to the meadows outside the town; here any man can dance with any woman, having simply to bid a sum of money for her, which goes into the coffers of the Brotherhood of the church. She can only refuse to dance if her husband or brother or father outbids him who makes the request,—the Church in this case appropriating the larger sum also.

Just then Don Carlos, an old captain, comes forward out of the crowd towards the speakers; he is an acquaintance of the apothecary Vitriolo. Between them they tell Morisco of a certain young Manuel Venegas, a man of noble lineage, whose father was at one time deeply in debt to a usurer, Elias Perez. He had to surrender all his property, and died a beggar; the son was brought up by Trinidad, the priest of the church of Santa Maria. He went away when a young man, made some money, and came back a little while after on the day of the feast of the Infant Jesus. He had loved Soledad, the daughter of Elias Perez, and now he bade madly for a dance with her. The old usurer, however, outbade him and laughed at him, —called him a beggar and swore he was his debtor for an unpaid million of the three owed by Manuel's father. The enraged Manuel swore he would go away, return with sacks of gold, buy the favour of a dance with Soledad, and marry her. Vitriolo, who himself loves Soledad in vain, is now very scornful about the young man; but Carlos warns him to be careful, as Manuel may still return. Vitriolo rejoins that it is very unlikely that Manuel will make the fortune he swore to make; that he is more likely

to be dead by now; but that, if living, he has probably married another woman and forgotten Soledad. For this Don Carlos threatens him with his sword. Vitriolo runs away and almost knocks against a man who has just entered. He glances at him and flies away in terror. It is Manuel Venegas,—Morisco's master.

The crowd is by this time preparing for the procession. Manuel is recognised and pointed out by one to another. Without observing them he solemnly lifts his hat and apostrophises with emotion his native town. Carlos approaches him and is joyfully welcomed; then Trinidad makes his way forward. Manuel tells his old guardian that he has now come back with vast possessions to have his revenge on Elias Perez, but he learns from Trinidad that the old usurer is dead. They all advise him to forget his love for Soledad; for a moment he fears that she too is dead, but Trinidad breaks the truth to him—she has married during his absence. Manuel rushes out, swearing to kill his rival.

The street now fills with people come to watch the procession. Soledad enters, with her mother, Maria Perez. Carlos in a whisper tells Maria of Manuel's return, and of his having gone off with the intention of killing Antonio Arregui (the husband of Soledad), who happens not to be in the town that day. After the distressed mother has vainly tried to induce Soledad to return home, Manuel comes in breathless and takes a place among the crowd. Then the religious procession passes through, the children, the members of the religious order, and the penitents singing the *Führ mich, Kind, nach Bethlehem*, from the *Spanisches Liederbuch*. Manuel catches sight of Soledad. His first thought is of revenge, and in spite of the efforts of Carlos to hold him back he draws his dagger and

rushes towards her. She sees him and sends out a cry of love. Just then the procession comes to an end; the picture of the Infant Jesus is brought in, and Manuel falls on his knees before it, still with the dagger in his hand. Trinidad reproaches him sternly and orders him to go into the church as a penitent among the others. He does so. Many of the people enter the church; the others, including Maria Perez, Soledad, and Carlos, remain on the stage. Antonio rushes in and commands his wife and her mother to return home. He inquires of Carlos where he can find the stranger who has been seeking him. As he is entering the church in quest of Manuel, Trinidad appears in the porch and tranquilly bids him wait until the morning, when he can visit the priest at his house and discuss with him what had best be done. Antonio agrees, and the crowd disperses at the request of Trinidad.

The opening scene of the second Act is the apothecary's shop of Vitriolo. It is night, and the outer doors are closed and bolted. Vitriolo is talking to his apprentice when a knock is heard. Soledad is admitted. The apprentice having been dismissed, Soledad coldly and scornfully reminds Vitriolo that he had once dared to ask for her hand, and she had thrown his letter to her dog to eat. She now tells him that if he will give her some poison she will herself avenge him. He at first refuses, but afterwards promises if she will tell him why she wishes to die. She laments that she can no longer live, since she still loves Manuel while he appears to hate her. Vitriolo corrects her false notion of Manuel's feelings towards her; but tells her that Manuel is now repentant and will probably leave the town at Trinidad's desire. This Soledad declares she cannot endure; she is in spirit

the bride of Manuel and of no other man. She tells Vitriolo how her father had tried to marry her, but found everyone in dread of the vengeance Manuel might one day wreak on them. On his deathbed the old usurer had tried to make her vow never to marry the young man whom he hated so deeply. Just before he died the tranquil Antonio came, who made light of the possible danger from the return of Manuel, and married Soledad. She has never found happiness with Antonio, and must go to Venegas or die. Vitriolo now refuses to give her the poison, but promises to carry any message she likes to Manuel. She hands him a ring that Manuel had once given her, and sends him to her lover to say that she implores him not to go from the town.

The second scene is laid in the sacristy of the church; the time is shortly before the dawn. Manuel Venegas is writing at a table. He justifies himself to Trinidad for having intended to kill the woman who had forgotten her pledge to him, and then hands the priest the document he has just finished—a testament bequeathing his possessions to Trinidad for the benefit of the poor people of the district. He himself is going away, since he feels he has now no place in his native town. The old priest tries to calm his angry spirit and lead him into a new way of life; but Manuel only answers that he has sworn to slay the man who has robbed him of his love, and his honour demands that he shall fulfil the vow. His plan is to go into the meadows where the dancing is to be, and bid any sum that may be necessary in order to dance with Soledad. Trinidad suggests that she may not leave her house; to which Manuel replies that the sum he will offer to the Brotherhood will be so enormous that the crowd will run to Antonio's house and bring

her forth. Trinidad falls on his knees before the picture of the infant Jesus, prays for Manuel, and totters out weeping.

Manuel, left alone, contemplates with deep emotion the picture which he had seen so often in the happier days of his childhood. At length he lights the picture up and kneels down before it with bowed head. Trinidad observes him from the door. Manuel rises, goes to one of his travelling boxes, takes from it a small casket and places it on the table. He draws out of it a number of costly ornaments—chains, girdles, bracelets, etc. He has brought these for his bride; now, his life's hope having been slain, he lays them at the feet of the Holy Child. He takes his richly-wrought dagger and its sheath out of his belt, draws the dagger and contemplates the blade, then places it on the heap of other jewels. He goes to a window and opens it; the dawn streams in. Trinidad enters, and is gratified to see Manuel in a more chastened mood. Manuel is on the point of leaving him when Antonio arrives. The priest, after a little difficulty, succeeds in reconciling Manuel to his rival before he departs.

The third Act opens in a field outside the town. Vitriolo is soliloquising. He means to revenge himself for Soledad's former treatment of him by taking her message to Manuel Venegas, who will kill Antonio and himself be executed; *then* he will give her the poison if she desires it. Manuel comes in to take a last look at the town. Vitriolo gives him the ring and Soledad's message, and tells him that Antonio has spread the report among the townspeople that he has frightened Manuel away, and that he and Soledad will be present at the dancing. This news drives away Manuel's repent-

ant mood of the morning and makes him his former fiery self.

The scene changes to the open country. Men and women are walking about the meadows, or dancing, or sitting in their Sunday attire on chairs and benches. In the background is the picture of the Holy Child, in front of which are piled the jewels and ornaments of Manuel, with the dagger on the top. Near the picture, on an elevated seat, is the Majordomus of the Brotherhood of the Infant Jesus; round him are the brothers.

Carlos congratulates the Majordomus on the exceptionally rich gifts the Brotherhood has received from Manuel Venegas. The Majordomus invokes a blessing on Manuel, and informs Carlos that Trinidad has been struck with a sudden and grave illness, and has made his testament disposing of the treasures given him by Manuel. Antonio, Soledad, and Maria Perez then enter. They sit down to watch the dancing, Antonio being between the two women. The Majordomus explains to Antonio, who is not a native of the town, the custom of the day—that a man can dance with any woman he chooses by bidding a certain sum, and that her lover or husband can prevent him only by paying a larger sum into the funds of the Brotherhood. There is a commotion at the back of the crowd, and Manuel Venegas enters. Antonio turns his chair round so that he has his back to the dancing place, in the midst of which stands Manuel, devouring Soledad with his eyes. In a loud voice he bids one hundred thousand reals for a dance with her. Antonio starts up and would throw himself upon Manuel, but is held back by the two women. The Majordomus reminds him that the law must be obeyed, and Soledad must dance

unless he can outbid the enormous sum of Manuel. Antonio offers all his possessions, but is told that a definite amount of gold must be named. As he cannot do this, Carlos, at the command of the Majordomus, leads Soledad out to Venegas, who throws his gold on the table. They dance, Antonio hiding his face in his hands. The dance being finished, Manuel opens his arms and Soledad throws herself into them. Antonio has again to be restrained from running at Manuel; the latter looks at him over his shoulder and presses Soledad more closely to him. They see that he is crushing her to death; when at last he relaxes his hold she falls lifeless, to everyone's horror. Antonio at last shakes himself free, rushes to the picture, seizes the dagger, and plunges it in Manuel's breast. Manuel opens his arms to receive the blow and thanks his slayer. The guards seize Antonio as the curtain falls.

It may be doubted whether the story would have made so good an opera as it does a novel.[1] There is a stateliness, a cumulation of effect in Alarcon's long-drawn version that is lost in compressing the story for the purpose of an operatic libretto. A great deal of the psychology, in fact, is of the kind that can be properly elaborated only in a novel. Alarcon skilfully builds up the character of Manuel from his wild boyhood to his splendid manhood, so that when the final tragedy comes it is seen to be the inevitable outcome of a score of forces that have been at work for years. All this grandeur of piled-up effect is necessarily lost in the stage version, where we see only the mature Manuel in his last hours. It is not the made Manuel that interests us most, but

[1] It may be read in a German translation, by F. Eyssenhardt, published by Spemann.

Manuel in the making. The opera-text, indeed, was bound to concentrate itself too much on the culminating scene of the novel. Hence most of the effect is lost of the long contest of wills between Manuel and the priest Trinidad, of the bitter hatred of the old usurer, and of the chapters in which Alarcon describes the gradual growth of the untamed boy in nobility of body and of mind, and the power he exercises over the imagination of his fellow-townsmen. In the opera, again, the apothecary Vitriolo is forced into greater prominence than is given him in the novel; and as he is barely essential for the action, and his is the type of character that music represents least successfully, one has misgivings about the probable result. Yet in many ways the subject is a good one for opera, and would probably have been for the most part highly effective with an audience that would not compare it with Alarcon's novel. The action is brisk, the stage pictures and climaxes very telling; while in the ardent southern love of Manuel and Soledad there was unlimited scope for the musician.

And whatever defects a stage performance of the complete opera might have shown in the literary basis of the work, there can be no doubt that Wolf's music would have kept us interested in it all as it does in *Der Corregidor*. The pathetic fragment of the score that has been published shows no sign of failing inspiration. The "Spring Chorus" with which the opera opens is as lovely, as warm and as fragrant as anything that Wolf ever wrote. Perhaps the most striking quality of the score is its wonderful simplicity, — the same pregnant simplicity that we observed in the Italian songs. His Manuel Venegas motive is typical of this; it expresses all the majesty, the dignity, the strength, and the deep,

rich emotions of the man, and yet how exquisitely simple it is—

Fortunately Wolf completed the scene where Manuel apostrophises his native town on his return. Few things could be so sparing of notes and yet so rich in feeling. The treatment of Soledad, whose leading motive is only just sketched before the fragment comes to an end, promised to be as passionate as anything in the earlier Spanish songs; yet here again the melodic and harmonic simplicity is very remarkable. And to think that this music, so warm, so lucid, so beautifully controlled, was written by a man on the very verge of insanity! Even when the final darkness was closing in on that great spirit there was an inner sanctuary where all was clear; there is nothing in this music to tell us of the flawed brain of the

Hugo Wolf whose trembling hands and haggard face appalled Michael Haberlandt on that last evening before the collapse came.

Enough evidence, it is hoped, has been given in the foregoing pages that the man whose untimely death we are still deploring was one of the most significant musicians of the modern world. Time will no doubt deal a little more severely with him than his contemporaries can do; he cannot hope to escape the general fate of musicians in this respect. But we need not always wait for the verdict of posterity. There are certain immutable criteria by which we can try all art, that of yesterday or to-day as well as that of two hundred years ago; and the great bulk of Wolf's work can safely stand the most severe inquisition in the name of truth and beauty. His songs at any rate will endure. The flaws there are in all artistic work will become visible in them in time, especially when the next great singer shall arrive who will complete Wolf as he completed his predecessors; but the mass of them are sure of immortality. They stand in a class by themselves, as different from the songs of other lyrists as the operas of Wagner are from the work of all other musical dramatists. And it will probably be with him as with Wagner; the very force and range of his achievement will make it impossible for anyone to follow him in his own line for at least another generation.

LIST OF WOLF'S PUBLISHED COMPOSITIONS

It has not been thought necessary to detail the early and still unpublished works of Wolf that were found among his papers after his death. The following list contains the names of all his published works, with the dates and places of their composition. Many of the songs and some of the choral works have already been issued with English words.

SONGS

LIEDER AUS DER JUGENDZEIT

An * (Lenau)	April	27,	1877
Wanderlied (Aus einem alten Liederbuche)	June	14	„
Traurige Wege (Lenau)	January	22–25,	1878
Nächtliche Wanderung (Lenau)	February	19	„
Das Kind am Brunnen (Hebbel)	April	22–27	„
Über Nacht (Sturm)	May	23–24	„
Ich stand in dunkeln Träumen (Heine)	„	26	„
Das ist ein Brausen und Heulen (Heine)	„	31	„
Wo ich bin, mich rings umdunkelt (Heine)	June	3	„
Aus meinen grossen Schmerzen (Heine)	„	5	„
Es war ein alter König (Heine)	October	4	„
Ernst ist der Frühling (Heine)	„	16–17	„

LIEDER NACH VERSCHIEDENEN DICHTER

(Under this title are grouped in one volume the following miscellaneous songs):—

A.—Sechs Lieder für eine Frauenstimme

Morgenthau (Aus einem alten Liederbuche)	1877
Das Vöglein (Hebbel)	1878
Die Spinnerin (Rückert)	„
Wiegenlied (im Sommer) (Reinick)	1882
Wiegenlied (im Winter) (Reinick)	„
Mausfallen-Sprüchlein (Mörike)	„

B.—Sechs Gedichte von Scheffel, Mörike, Goethe und Kerner

Wächterlied auf der Wartburg (Scheffel)	1887
Der König bei der Krönung (Mörike)	1886
Biterolf (Scheffel)	„
Beherzigung (Goethe)	1887
Wanderers Nachtlied (Goethe)	„
Zur Ruh, zur Ruh! (Kerner)	1883

C.—Vier Gedichte nach Heine, Shakespeare und Lord Byron

Wo wird einst (Heine)	1888
Lied des transferirten Zettel (aus dem Sommernachtstraum)	1889
Sonne der Schlummerlosen (Byron)	1896
Keine gleicht von allen Schönen (Byron)	„

D.—Alte Weisen: Sechs Gedichte von Gottfried Keller

Tretet ein, hoher Krieger	Unterach, May 25, 1890
Singt mein Schatz wie ein Fink	„ June 2 „
Du milchjunger Knabe	„ „ 5 „
Wandl' ich in dem Morgenthau	„ „ 7 „

Das Köhlerweib ist trunken	Unterach, June 8,	1890
Wie glänzt der helle Mond	„ „ 16	„

E.—Drei Gesänge aus Ibsens "Das Fest auf Solhaug"

Gesang Margits	1891
Gudmunds erster Gesang	„
Gudmunds zweiter Gesang	„

F.—Drei Gedichte von Robert Reinick

Gesellenlied	1888
Morgenstimmung	1896
Skolie	1889

G.—Drei Gedichte von Michelangelo

Wohl denk' ich oft	Vienna, March 18,	1897
Alles endet, was entstehet	„ „ 20	„
Fühlt meine Seele	„ „ 22–28	„

POEMS BY MÖRIKE

Der Tambour	Perchtoldsdorf, February 16,	1888
Der Knabe und das Immelein	„ „ 22	„
Jägerlied	„ „ 22	„
Ein Stündlein wohl vor Tag	„ „ 22	„
Der Jäger	„ „ 23	„
Nimmersatte Liebe	„ „ 24	„
Auftrag	„ „ 24	„
Zur Warnung	„ „ 25	„
Lied vom Winde	„ „ 29	„
Bei einer Trauung	„ March 1	„
Zitronenfalter im April	„ „ 6	„
Der Genesene an die Hoffnung	„ „ 6	„
Elfenlied	„ „ 7	„
Der Gärtner	„ „ 7	„

THE WOLF MONUMENT, BY EDMUND HELLMER, IN THE VIENNA CENTRAL CEMETERY

Abschied	Perchtoldsdorf,	March	8,	1888
Denk' es o Seele (orchestrated 1891)	"	"	10	"
Auf einer Wanderung	"	"	11	"
Gebet (orchestrated 1890)	"	"	13	"
Verborgenheit	"	"	13	"
Lied eines Verliebten	"	"	14	"
Selbstgeständnis	"	"	17	"
Erstes Liebeslied eines Mädchens	"	"	20	"
Fussreise	"	"	21	"
Rat einer Alten	"	"	22	"
Begegnung	"	"	22	"
Das verlassene Mägdlein	"	"	24	"
Storchenbotschaft	"	"	27	"
Frage und Antwort	"	"	29	"
Lebe wohl	"	"	31	"
Heimweh	"	April	1	"
Seufzer (orchestrated 1889)	"	"	12	"
Auf ein altes Bild (orchestrated 1889)	"	"	14	"
An eine Aeolsharfe	"	"	15	"
Um Mitternacht	"	"	20	"
Auf eine Christblume I.	"	"	21	"
Peregrina I.	"	"	28	"
Peregrina II.	"	"	30	"
Agnes	"	May	3	"
Er ist's (orchestrated 1890)	"	"	5	"
In der Frühe (orchestrated 1890)	"	"	5	"
Im Frühling	"	"	8	"
Nixe Binsefuss	"	"	13	"
Die Geister am Mummelsee	"	"	18	"
An den Schlaf (orchestrated 1890)	Unterach,	October	4	"
Neue Liebe (orchestrated 1890)	"	"	4	"
Zum neuen Jahre	"	"	5	"
Schlafendes Jesuskind (orchestrated 1890)	"	"	6	"
Wo find' ich Trost? (orchestrated 1890)	"	"	6	"
Charwoche	"	"	8	"
Gesang Weylas (orchestrated 1890)	"	"	9	"
Der Feuerreiter	"	"	10	"
An die Geliebte	"	"	10	"
Auf eine Christblume II.	Perchtoldsdorf,	November	26	"

POEMS BY EICHENDORFF

Erwartung	Vienna,	January 26,	1880
Die Nacht	„	February 3	„
Der Soldat II.	„	December 14,	1886
Der Soldat I.	„	March 7,	1887
Die Zigeunerin	„	„ 19	„
Das Waldmädchen	„	April 20	„
Nachtzauber	„	May 24	„
Verschwiegene Liebe	„	August 31,	1888
Der Glücksritter	„	September 16	„
Seemanns Abschied	Unterach,	„ 21	„
Der Scholar	„	„ 22	„
Der Musikant	„	„ 22	„
Der verzweifelte Liebhaber	„	„ 23	„
Unfall	„	„ 25	„
Der Freund	„	„ 26	„
Liebesglück	„	„ 27	„
Ständchen	„	„ 28	„
Der Schreckenberger	Rettenbach-Wildniss, near Ischl	„ 14	„
Heimweh	Unterach,	„ 29	„
Lieber alles	„	„ 29	„

Included in the first edition of the Eichendorff volume were three songs — *Erwartung*, *Die Nacht*, and *Waldmädchen*,—which Wolf omitted from the second edition. They are now published separately.

POEMS BY GOETHE

Harfenspieler I. (orchestrated 1890)	Vienna,	October 27,	1888
Harfenspieler II. (orchestrated 1890)	„	„ 29	„
Harfenspieler III. (orchestrated 1890)	„	„ 30	„
Philine	„	„ 30	„
Spottlied aus Wilhelm Meister	„	November 2	„
Anakreons Grab (orchestrated 1890–93)	„	„ 4	„
Der Schäfer	„	„ 4	„
Der Rattenfänger (orchestrated 1890)	„	„ 6	„

Gleich und Gleich	Vienna,	November	6, 1888
Dank des Paria	»	»	9 »
Frech und froh	»	»	14 »
St. Nepomuks Vorabend	»	»	15 »
Gutmann und Gutweib	»	»	28 »
Ritter Kurts Brautfahrt	Döbling,	December	9 »
Der Sänger	»	»	14 »
Mignon (Ballade)	»	»	17 »
Mignon II. (orchestrated 1893)	»	»	18 »
Mignon I. (orchestrated 1890)	»	»	19 »
Frühling übers Jahr	»	»	21 »
Mignon III.	»	»	22 »
Epiphanias	»	»	27 »
Cophtisches Lied II.	»	»	28 »
Cophtisches Lied I.	»	»	28 »
Beherzigung	»	»	30 »
Blumengruss	»	»	31 »
Prometheus (orchestrated 1890)	»	January	2, 1889
Königlich Gebet	»	»	7 »
Grenzen der Menschheit	»	»	9 »
Was in der Schenke waren heute	»	»	16 »
Solang man nüchtern ist	»	»	16 »
Ob der Koran von Ewigkeit sei	»	»	17 »
Sie haben wegen Trunkenheit	»	»	18 »
Trunken müssen wir alle sein	»	»	18 »
Phänomen	»	»	19 »
Erschaffen und Beleben	»	»	21 »
Nicht Gelegenheit macht Diebe	»	»	21 »
Hochbeglückt in deiner Liebe	»	»	23 »
Wie sollt' ich heiter bleiben	»	»	23 »
Als ich auf dem Euphrat schiffte	»	»	24 »
Dies zu deuten bin erbötig	»	»	24 »
Wenn ich dein gedenke	»	»	25 »
Komm Liebchen komm	»	»	25 »
Hätt ich irgend wohl bedenken	»	»	26 »
Locken haltet mich gefangen	»	»	29 »
Nimmer will ich dich verlieren	»	»	30 »
Frech und froh II.	»	February	2 »
Der neue Amadis	»	»	5 »

Genialisch Treiben	Döbling,	February	10, 1889
Ganymed	„	January	11 „
Die Bekehrte	„	February	12 „
Die Spröde	Perchtoldsdorf,	October	21 „

POEMS FROM THE "SPANISCHES LIEDERBUCH" OF HEYSE AND GEIBEL

Wer sein holdes Lieb verloren	Perchtoldsdorf,	October	28, 1889
Ich fuhr über Meer, ich zog über Land	„	„	31 „
Preciosas Sprüchlein gegen Kopfweh	„	„	31 „
Wenn du zu den Blumen gehst	„	November	1 „
Alle gingen, Herz, zur Ruh	„	„	2 „
Nun wandre Maria	„	„	4 „
Die ihr schwebet um diese Palmen	„	„	5 „
Die du Gott gebarst, du Reine	„	„	5 „
Bedeckt mich mit Blumen	„	„	10 „
Seltsam ist Juanas Weise	„	„	14 „
Treibt mir mit Lieben Spott	„	„	15 „
Und schläfst du mein Mädchen	„	„	17 „
In dem Schatten meiner Locken	„	„	17 „
Herz verzage nicht geschwind	„	„	19 „
Sagt, seid Ihr es, feiner Herr	„	„	19 „
Klinge, klinge mein Pandero	„	„	20 „
Herr, was trägt der Boden hier	„	„	24 „
Blindes Schauen, dunkle Leuchte	„	„	26 „
Bitt' ihn o Mutter, bitte den Knaben	„	„	26 „
Wer tat deinem Füsslein weh?	„	December	5 „
Auf dem grünen Balkon	„	„	12 „
Sie blasen zum Abmarsch	„	„	13 „
Führ mich, Kind, nach Bethlehem	„	„	15 „
Wunden trägst du, mein Geliebter	„	„	16 „
Ach wie lang' die Liebe schlummert	„	„	19 „
Ach des Knaben Augen	„	„	21 „

Mühvoll komm' ich und beladen .	Perchtoldsdorf,	January	10,	1890
Nun bin ich dein . . .	„	„	15	„
Trau nicht der Liebe . .	„	March	28	„
Weint nicht ihr Äuglein . .	„	„	29	„
Schmerzliche Wonnen und wonnige Schmerzen . .	„	„	29	„
Ach im Maien war's . .	„	„	30	„
Eide, so die Liebe schwur .	„	„	31	„
Geh' Geliebter, geh' jetzt . .	„	April	1	„
Liebe hier im Herzen zündet .	„	„	2	„
Deine Mutter süsses Kind .	„	„	2	„
Mögen alle bösen Zungen . .	„	„	3	„
Sagt ihm, dass er zu mir komme .	„	„	4	„
Dereinst, dereinst Gedanke mein .	„	„	11	„
Tief im Herzen trag ich Pein .	„	„	12	„
Komm' o Tod von Nacht umgeben	„	„	14	„
Ob auch finstre Blicke glitten .	„	„	16	„
Da nur Leid und Leidenschaft .	„	„	20	„
Wehe der, die mir verstrickte .	„	„	27	„

POEMS FROM THE "ITALIENISCHES LIEDERBUCH" OF PAUL HEYSE

Vol. I

Mir ward gesagt, du reisest in die Ferne	Unterach,	September	25,	1890
Ihr seid die Allerschönste . .	„	October	2	„
Gesegnet sei, durch den die Welt entstund . . .	„	„	3	„
Selig Ihr Blinden . . .	„	„	4	„
Wer rief dich denn . . .	Döbling,	November	13	„
Der Mond hat eine schwere Klag' erhoben . . .	„	„	13	„
Nun lass uns Frieden schliessen .	„	„	14	„
Dass doch gemalt all deine Reize wären	„	„	29,	1891

Du denkst mit einem Fädchen mich zu fangen . . .	Döbling,	December	2,	1891
Mein Liebster ist so klein . .	„	„	3	„
Und willst du deinen Liebsten sterben sehen . . .	„	„	4	„
Wie lange schon war immer mein Verlangen . . .	„	„	4	„
Geselle, woll'n wir uns in Kutten hüllen . . .? . . .	„	„	5	„
Nein, junger Herr . . .	„	„	7	„
Hoffärtig seid Ihr, schönes Kind .	„	„	8	„
Auch kleine Dinge können uns entzücken . . .	„	„	9	„
Ein Ständchen Euch zu bringen .	„	„	10	„
Ihr jungen Leute . . .	„	„	11	„
Mein Liebster singt am Haus im Mondenschein . . .	„	„	12	„
Heb' auf dein blondes Haupt .	„	„	12	„
Wir haben beide lange Zeit geschwiegen . . .	„	„	16	„
Man sagt mir, deine Mutter wollt' es nicht . . .	„	„	23	„

Vol. II

Ich esse nun mein Brot nicht trocken mehr	Perchtoldsdorf,	March	25,	1896
Mein Liebster hat zu Tische mich geladen	„	„	26	„
Ich liess mir sagen . . .	„	„	28	„
Schon streckt ich aus im Bett .	„	„	29	„
Du sagst mir, dass ich keine Fürstin sei . . .	„	„	30	„
Lass sie nur gehn, die so die Stolze spielt	„	„	31	„
Wie viele Zeit verlor ich . .	„	April	2	„
Und steht Ihr früh am Morgen auf	„	„	3	„
Wohl kenn ich Euern Stand .	„	„	9	„

Wie soll ich fröhlich sein	Perchtoldsdorf, April	12,	1896
O wär' dein Haus	"	"	12	"
Sterb' ich, so hüllt in Blumen	"	"	13	"
Gesegnet sei das Grün	"	"	13	"
Wenn du mich mit den Augen streifst	"	"	19	"
Was soll der Zorn, mein Schatz	"	"	20	"
Benedeit die sel'ge Mutter	"	"	21	"
Schweig einmal still, du garst' ger Schwätzer dort	"	"	23	"
Nicht länger kann ich singen	"	"	23	"
Wenn du, mein Liebster, steigst zum Himmel auf	"	"	24	"
Ich hab in Penna	"	"	25	"
Heut' Nacht erhob ich mich um Mitternacht	"	"	25	"
O wüsstest du, wieviel ich deinetwegen	"	"	26	"
Verschling' der Abgrund	"	"	29	"
Was für ein Lied soll dir gesungen werden	"	"	30	"

OPERAS AND OTHER MUSIC FOR THE THEATRE

Der Corregidor. Opera in four Acts, text by Rosa Mayreder. Composed in 1895.

Manuel Venegas. Begun in 1897, but unfinished. Text by Hoernes.

Das Fest auf Solhaug. Drama by Ibsen. Incidental music composed in 1890–91.

CHORAL WORKS

Six *a cappella* choruses to words by Eichendorff, 1881.

Christnacht, 1886–89.

Elfenlied, 1888–91.

Der Feuerreiter, 1888–92.
Dem Vaterland, 1890–97.
The "Frühlingschor" from *Manuel Venegas* is also issued separately.

INSTRUMENTAL WORKS

String Quartet in D minor, 1879–80.
Penthesilea (symphonic poem), 1883.
Italienische Serenade (for small orchestra), 1893–94.
Italienische Serenade (arranged for String Quartet).

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